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ABSTRACT

A set of lessons to introduce "Julius Caesar" to secondary school students unfamiliar with Shakespeare is provided in this teaching guide. Only a critical fraction of the play is covered in the lessons. First, a synopsis of a modern high school situation whose conflicts parallel those in "Julius Caesar" is presented; then, directions are given for making explicit the relationship between the modern situation and Brutus' soliloquy (II,i). Subsequent activities include an enactment of the assassination scene and discussions of Antony's confrontation with the conspirators (III,i), Antony's "Cry, Havoc!" speech, the funeral oration, the scene between Brutus and Lucius and between Brutus and the ghost (IV,3), and the last two speeches in the play. Teacher questions and comments, detailed analysis of passages, suggested pantomimes, blocking diagrams for scenes, modernized versions of some scenes, and one objective and one essay test are included. (LH)

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THEATRE

Volume Two

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SHAKESPEARE'S "JULIUS CAESAR"

The Initial Classroom Presentation

by James Hoetker with Alan Engelsman

REVISED EDITION

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INTRODUCTION

> *When we interpret in action, there is less danger of explication becoming an end in itself, or [illegible] disconnected rational appraisal of what has never been personally felt.*
>
> --John Dixon

The first set of lessons in this series suggested a way of introducing dramatic literature that helps develop the peculiar skills students need to read plays intelligently. This second set of lessons goes on to suggest a way of introducing students to their first Shakespearean play. Judging from the results of extensive field tests, the experiences outlined in these lessons lead most students to understand and enjoy the play and to come away from it with the feeling that they have the ability to understand and interpret Shakespeare, so that they have no reason to fear the Bard or to hoot and laugh when Shakespeare's name is mentioned.

We have chosen Julius Caesar as the subject of these lessons simply because it still is the first Shakespearean play most students have to read, a customary or required part of the curriculum in many if not most schools in the ninth or tenth grades. But even if Harvard and the College Boards had not, in the dim past, so firmly embedded Caesar in the curriculum, we would probably have chosen to work with the play simply because it is, of all Shakespeare's plays, the most straightforward in plot, language, and characterization, and therefore probably the best choice as a first play.

Professor Bertrand Evans recently devoted an entire book to the subject of the "initial classroom presentation" of Shakespearean plays in the high school classroom.[1] Since we tend to agree with Evans' criticisms of commonly used methods of teaching Shakespeare, and since, at the same time, we are dismayed by the conceptions of drama, education, and "aesthetic experience" implied in Evans' positive methodological recommendations, we can economically introduce our own position by reference to his argument.

Evans asserts in his introduction that it is of "quintessential importance" for students to get from the play "the aesthetic experience of the play itself, as a work of art."[2] This is exactly what we think, and we also agree with Evans that the "good" one can get from a work of art is "intimately associated with the pleasure that is to be had from artistic works--in fact,...it is the pleasure, if anything that makes the'salutary effect' possible."[3] Evans considers and rejects a number of possible approaches to Shakespeare before he makes explicit his own proposals about how to give students "the aesthetic experience of the play itself." Most importantly, he condemns the practice--which he correctly describes as "the most widely used method of teaching Shakespeare in the United States"--of assigning silent reading and then following it with class discussion. He rejects this approach on the grounds that (1) it has been manifestly unsuccessful in practice, and (2) the majority of high school students simply "cannot read Shakespeare with any significant amount of understanding or with any real pleasure at all."[4]

Evans asserts that "What is most important in Shakespeare is the *incredible wealth of ideas bodied forth in the incredible profusion of imagery*."[5] Access may be had to this wealth, he insists, only by the method of "line-by-line reading of the entire play by the teacher with students following in their own texts." As Evans describes it, the method would involve "a combination of reading, re-reading, comment, question, and discussion carried on as a single operation....It might be described as the 'joint progress' of teacher and students through the text of the play, with the teacher always in control of pace, depth, and emphasis."[6]

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[1] Teaching Shakespeare in the High School (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1966). Essentially the same material may be found in James Knapton and Bertrand Evans, Teaching a Literature-Centered English Program (New York: Random House, 1967).

[2] Teaching Shakespeare, p. 2.

[3] Teaching Shakespeare, p. 3.

[4] Teaching Shakespeare, p. 88.

[5] Teaching Shakespeare, p. 74.

Evans sets up a dozen or so strawman objections to the method (too slow, doesn't demand enough of students, fragments the play, and so on), knocks them down, then presents an impassioned brief for his contention that such line-by-line study of the text is THE method for introducing Shakespeare to high school students.

Evans' criticisms of common methods of teaching Shakespeare are trenchant and we recommend them to the reader;[7] but we think his recommendation of line-by-line reading of the text is, at best, naive, and, at worst, destructive.[8] So let us approach our own positive recommendations by way of offering some of the real (as opposed to rhetorical) objections to Evans' method.

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[6] Teaching Shakespeare, p. 95.

[7] We certainly do not, however, go along with his argument a la Hazlitt that somehow reading the text is superior to seeing the performed play, and that students should read and study a play before they see it done. We would much prefer that students see a good production of a Shakespearean play before they read it; with some students, we would prefer they see the play instead of reading it.

[8] Pedagogically, the point at issue is more general than the teaching of a first Shakespearean play. It is the relative futility of trying to convey real understanding to the average student by purely verbal means. John Holt put the point nicely in How Children Learn (New York: Pitman Publishing Co., 1967), pp. 178-179:

> Explanations. We teachers--perhaps all human beings--are in the grip of an astonishing delusion. We think that we can take a picture, a structure, a working model of something, constructed in our minds out of long experience and familiarity, and by turning that model into a string of words, transplant it whole into the mind of someone else. Perhaps once in a thousand times, when the explanation is extraordinarily good, and the listener extraordinarily experienced and skillful at turning word strings into non-verbal reality, and when explainer and listener share in common many of the experiences being talked about, the process may work, and some real meaning may be communicated. Most of the time, explaining does not increase understanding, and may even lessen it.

First of all, there is the objection that Evans' has not really thought through what he is saying. It is crucial, in his argument, that the students make their first acquaintance with the text through the line-by-line method. It will take, he estimates, about five weeks to get through a Shakespearean play this way. So consider this: if it is true that the method generates interest and enthusiasm, is it sensible to expect that a student who is excited by the first act of a play will really refrain from reading ahead to see how things turn out? Will he wait five weeks to see what happens to, for instance, Mr. and Mrs. Macbeth or Brutus? If the method works as Evans avers it does, the student will not wait. So we have the paradox that if the line-by-line method leads the student to see the virtues of Shakespeare, the student will gain his first experience of most of the play through private, silent reading--the method that Evans most deplores. And what if the student does wait, from day to day, to have the teacher lead him from scene to scene? Then, we would suggest, that teacher is deeply involved in self-deception if he thinks his students are being aesthetically or intellectually engaged by the play.

A more substantial objection to Evans' proposal is that the line-by-line method requires a higher level of scholarship and skill that the average high school teacher can be reasonably expected to achieve. The line-by-line method, if it is going to work, is basically a dramatic improvisation; it is a performance, not of a play, but of an encounter with a play. To make it work, the teacher must be not only a considerable scholar and actor-director, but an immensely sensitive and flexible human being, capable of diagnosing and properly responding to the smallest signs and signals feeding back from his student audience. Not one teacher or professor in a thousand has the requisite combination of abilities to bring it off. The method he recommends, Evans says, "does not differ essentially from that used by professors in Shakespeare seminars." And that, in short, is primarily what is wrong with it. English teachers are not professors and squirmy adolescents are not graduate students in English. And a great many graduate seminars devoted to line-by-line explication are crashing bores, even to people who love the literature being explicated.[9]

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[9] Within the educational professions, says a tentative version of a law we are trying to formulate, the mean reputation for expertise of members of an identifiable stratum of the profession is inversely related to the mean quality of instruction given by educators at that particular level. For example, the most effective teaching, so far as we can tell, goes on at the lower elementary levels, and therefore primary grade teachers have a mean reputation of near zero as methodological experts. By common agreement of students, ex-students, and critics within the academy, the worst of all teaching is committed in the graduate schools, whose professors, of course, have the highest prestige as experts, tell everyone else how to teach, and are actually listened to. We bring this up for

The line-by-line method is tolerable to the student only if the teacher is an inordinately talented actor and diagnostician. But even then, to move to a final objection, we see no possible way it can lead to an aesthetic experience of literature. It can, with certain types of students, lead to an aesthetic experience of the critical act, which is a respectable and praiseworthy thing, certainly, but not the same as the aesthetic experience of literature. Criticism, analysis, the acquiring and using of scholarly information--these are, to a certain tiny minority of high school and college students, playful and pleasurable activities in themselves; the line-by-line analysis, done by a skillful teacher, may be for such students indeed a good way to get at Shakespeare or any other worthwhile writer. For all the rest, such exercises are routines cynically to be mastered or, as a function of each student's abilities, occasions for boredom, bewilderment, frustration, insult, or degradation.

We believe that overwhelming adolescents with a premature emphasis upon profound scholarly analyses and filling them up with facts and expert opinions is a very good way to prevent students from having "the aesthetic experience of the play itself." And, in fact, because it teaches them to fear and mistrust literature, it will often increase the probabilities that students will not have the aesthetic experience of other works of literature. To turn to our own preferences, we believe that, besides coming closer to maintaining the integrity of the form that Shakespeare chose to write in, our approach by way of role-playing, improvisation, mime, and so on is more consonant with sound psychological principles than either the approaches Evans condemns or those he recommends. We do everything possible, for example, to avoid frustrating

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two reasons. First, while we are aware that much bad teaching goes on in the high schools, and have written on the subject elsewhere, we continue to be astounded afresh every time someone seriously suggests that we can improve high school instruction by having teachers more closely ape professors. Second, we have, in the lessons that follow, borrowed various techniques from those lower levels of school where teaching and learning (as opposed to assigning and testing) really seem to be going on. We have done this because we are seriously concerned with finding ways to give students meaningful experiences with literature, not because we are anti-intellectuals or oppressed by some sort of inverse snobbism.

(and thereby losing) even the slowest student. We start by relating the play to concerns within the students' own lives.[10] Then we try to lead the student up to his first encounter with Shakespeare's language and imagery by a series of carefully graduated steps, seeing that he is likely to be reinforced for each partial success along the way (by the evidence of his own accomplishments, by the "natural" reinforcers inherent in the dramatic exercises, and by the successive revelations of Shakespeare's - and Anthony's and Brutus' and Cassius' - way of working.) We have, furthermore, provided plenty of opportunity for "messing about" with the play and its elements; and we have provided situations in which the students must be decision-makers, but in which there is little chance of their being reproved or punished for having made a decision.[11]

The teacher plays a most important role in these lessons, besides providing vital information _when it is needed_; to put it simply, he does for the students what they cannot at first do for themselves without an unacceptable risk of failure or frustration. But then, in carefully planned stages, he turns over to the students more and more responsibility as they are ready for it.

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[10] Professor Evans discusses and approves a strategy similar to our own for relating _Julius Caesar_ to the students' own experiences (_Teaching Shakespeare_, pp. 123-124 and 165-166). The difference is that, in Evans scheme, a parallel contemporary situation is introduced to involve students in talking and thinking about the issues involved in the conflict. In our scheme, the parallel situation serves as the occasion for improvisation of scenes which dramatize the conflict.

[11] Our theoretical concerns are related to de Charms' division of people into "pawns" and "origins." An "origin" is a person who considers his own behavior to be determined by his own choosing; a "pawn," contrariwise, is a person who considers his behavior to be determined by external forces beyond his control. According to de Charms, the sort of internal motivation which leads to real learning is associated with one's perceiving himself as an origin; perhaps the best way to help one perceive himself as an origin is to treat him as one, which is exactly what we try to do with students in these lessons. See Richard de Charms, _Personal Causation: The Internal Affective Determinants of Behavior_ (New York: Academic Press, 1968).

Evans says that "high school students...cannot read Shakespeare with any real pleasure at all." Of course they can't. No one teaches them how to. One does not learn how to read Shakespeare just by hearing someone else read nor by listening to someone else tell what he has discovered in his reading nor by answering questions. One learns to read Shakespeare by reading Shakespeare--but by reading Shakespeare under conditions where everything possible maximizes the chance of a student's apprehending the author's intentions, and under conditions in which apprehension, insight or creative response is frequently rewarded (by teachers or by other students, or by feelings of pleasure, or, most surely of all, by the act of responding itself). These are general specifications, of course; they can be fulfilled in many ways, with or without a school and a teacher. But the lessons that we present here represent one approach which has the characteristic of allowing students to learn how to deal successfully with Shakespeare under conditions favorable to success.

This decidedly does not mean that we want to "simplify" Shakespeare or somehow "bring him down to the students' level." Nor does it mean that we in any way denigrate the value of sound scholarship or the necessity of scholarly knowledge and critical techniques. We think that an effective teacher of Shakespeare indeed needs to know Shakespeare thoroughly. But he does not need to teach high school students what he himself learned in college and graduate school. Let the student who goes to college learn those things in college. The high school student needs to be given a chance to enjoy Shakespeare and have him become "relevant" (an important word we put in quotes in deference to the fact that it has become a slogan). The teacher's job is not to pass along what he has been taught, but to use what he knows to fulfill the students' needs. Obviously, though, the more the teacher knows, the better he will be equipped to help a student at a particular moment. We have tried, in our lessons, to exemplify some of the ways scholarly knowledge can be used (as opposed to "conveyed") to (1) enhance understanding at an appropriate level and (2) inform students (by concrete example) of the usefulness of such knowledge.

Let us summarize. Shakespeare's plays are great poetry, certainly, and maybe great philosophy. But first of all, they are great plays. Before anything else, the plays are scripts, scenarios, opportunities for actors and directors. "All Shakespeare's plays," as Jan Kott puts it,

> are great spectacles abounding in the clatter of arms, marching armies, duels, feasts and drunken revels, wrestling

> contests, clowning, winds and storms, physical love, cruelty and suffering. Elizabethan theatre was--like the Chinese opera--a theatre for the eyes.[12]

Much of what is best in Shakespeare, that is to say, and most of what is available to most students in our schools, is not to be apprehended by the critical intellect alone. Shakespeare was a man of the theatre, and some of his greatest triumphs are not verbal at all, but visual, theatrical. It is exactly these theatrical effects--the essential Shakespeare to everyone but the professional literary scholar--that are likely to be missing in the line-by-line explication of the plays; they certainly are what is missing in the reading of the plays by students who have not been trained to read drama; and they are what are emphasized in the following lessons.

We no longer feel, as we did when we began work on these curricula three years ago, almost alone in taking the position that students' needs rather than the convenience of college instructors should determine what goes on in high school classrooms. Nor do we now feel alone in giving the "structure of the discipline" an ancillary and subordinate place to the structure of the students' experiences with a particular literary work. Suffice it to say that we believe that students' needs include needs for those things that Shakespeare has to offer adolescents and that we are concerned with developing pedagogical methods which make some of Shakespeare's riches available to students.

A statement by Douglas Barnes quite well summarizes the beliefs that have guided the writing and revision of these lessons.

> "When a group of children (or students) is able to re-create script as if it were their own improvisation, this is indeed self-exploration, though with the subtler aid of the dramatist's words. And it is improvisation that can help children to bring to script those aspects of their real and imaginary experience which will enable them to re-create the dramatist's words as if they were their own. If a play is put into the hands of a group of pupils with no more than the instruction to 'act' it, what they will do is likely to show little sign of an imaginative reconstruction of the script in voice and movement unless the

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[12] Shakespeare Our Contemporary (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1964), p.232.

class is accustomed to improvisation. And still less valuable is the over-academic approach which assumes the pupils' ability to experience the play and so moves straight from a 'reading' of the text to impersonal literary comment, usually provided by the teacher. (The talk of a group of pupils who are engaged in interpreting a script may be for most of our pupils the most meaningful form of literary criticism.) In sum it is proposed that if a play is to be meaningful to pupils it must be approached in ways that bring the activity closer to improvisation. And this remains true even for work with sixteen- to eighteen-year olds (and beyond?), though at that stage once the play has been given imaginative life the students can progress to more objective discussion."[13]

AN OVERVIEW OF THE LESSONS

These lessons do not begin with the first scene and work through the play. Only a fraction of the play, in fact, is covered in class during the course of these lessons, which take about two weeks. At the end of that time, the teacher may either assign the play to be read, or show a movie, or take his students to a production, or consider the whole unit completed. It would be our opinion that, except with better students, the rest of the play would not need to be studied--that the legitimate goals for teaching ninth or tenth graders their first Shakespearean play would have been accomplished.

The activities in the lessons follow this sequence. The students are given a situation involving a conspiracy. The setting is a modern high school, but the conflicts parallel those in Act I of Julius Caesar. Unlike similar approaches which use modern situations as topics of discussion to attune students to the issues in a play, the first lesson asks students to improvise a dramatic scene embodying the conflicts in the situation. Then each student is to act as a dramatist, writing a brief resolution to the conflict in the form of a letter to one of the antagonists.

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[13] Quoted in John Dixon, Growth Through English (Reading, England: National Association for the Teaching of English, 1967) p. 39.

The relationship between the introductory situation and the play Julius Caesar is then made explicit and the students are given a plot outline of the entire play. The first part of the actual text that the students see is Brutus' soliloquy in his garden (II, i, 10-34). The teacher reads this aloud and comments on it (in, we hope, a manner Evans would approve); the emphasis is upon what the soliloquy reveals about Brutus' character.

Then the entire class takes part in an enactment of the assassination itself (in every case, there are narrative bridges between scenes). Plutarch's descriptions of the assassination are used as if they were stage directions, and the scene is pantomimed accordingly.

Then a modern English, prose version of the scene in which Antony confronts the conspirators (III, i, 122-293) is acted out, with due attention to motivation, blocking, and business. The scene is analyzed and realized apart from the problems that the antiquated verse creates. The students will later come back to the scene, after learning more about the major characters in it, and act it in Shakespeare's language, their understanding of which should be facilitated by their knowledge and by their memories of the look and the feel of the scene.

After the prose version of the confrontation scene is acted, up to the point of the conspirator's exit, the students listen to Antony's "Cry, Havoc!" speech and then discuss its dramatic function.

Next Antony's funeral oration is read, analyzed, and/or acted out, with the whole class participating. A few lines at the opening of IV, i are briefly looked at (another aspect of Antony's character), and then the students return to the confrontation scene and act it in Shakespeare's language.

The next scene considered is that in Brutus' tent, between Brutus and Lucius, after Cassius' departure and before the entrance of the ghost (IV, 3, 229-274). This scene is pantomimed by several groups of students and the point is made that the scene can serve its dramatic functions without any dialogue at all. The entrance of the ghost and Brutus' reaction (IV, 3, 275-309) to it is then read and discussed in relation to the preceding scene. Then the two parts of the scene are acted through.

Finally, the last two speeches in the play, by Antony and Octavius, are dealt with as summing up and commenting on what has gone before.

This is a bare outline. The students are called on to write and talk and to make decisions and to evaluate in various places in the lessons. The acting is so handled that each acting experience presents different problems to be solved.

In the teacher's portion of the script, there is deliberate confusion among points of view toward the play, in imitation of the way it seems to us the trained reader acts, mentally, as he interacts with the text of the play. That is, at one moment the text is looked at from the point of view of an actor preparing the part; the next moment, the student is urged to react to the characters as if they were real people; similarly, the discussion is sometimes about stage effects; at other times, the action is treated as if it were taking place, in reality, in the Forum or on the battlefield.

Often, in the lessons themselves, there are comments explaining what a particular activity is meant to accomplish, or why a particular thing is done the way it is. Less often there are remarks to the effect that, if students do such-and-such, it may be taken as a sign they are with you.

Undoubtedly, the lessons as they stand are still imperfect. But they have been tried out on a large scale all across the country, in classes ranging from honors classes in private academies to remedial classes in ghetto schools. These trials have given us confidence in the efficacy of our general approach and provided the information on which this revision has been based.

A NOTE ON THE MODERNIZATION OF SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE

A feature of these lessons is that the students work with a modern English version of a scene from the play and investigate it dramatically before they are called on to deal with the same scene in Shakespeare's language. The strategem has worked even better than we had hoped it would, and we found that quite average students can use Elizabethan English naturally and easily when they come finally to act out the scene in the original language. Generally, teachers were delighted by the student response to the scene. Would there not, some asked, or were asked by their students, be a better chance to get this sort of response consistently if the whole text of the play were modernized? The plot, the dramatic action, the complexities of character and motive could still be retained, but in a form more available to the average student.

Our feeling has always been that "simplified" and "modernized" and "adapted" versions of the classics were little more than admissions of defeat; and that it would be better, if one cared to admit he did not know how to teach the original literature, to use appropriate modern works. We had used the modern English prose version of the scene simply as a way to separate the dramatic and conceptual difficulties of the scene from the language difficulties, so that the students might successfully deal with one set of problems at a time.

There is a widely circulated story that Louis Armstrong, when asked by a lady to define jazz, replied,"If you got to ask, you ain't never goin' to know." The case may be the same here. If one feels he must ask why Shakespeare has to be read in the original, there is probably no way to explain to him what is lost when Shakespeare is modernized, even if by so gifted a poet as Robert Graves. What we hope that we have done in these lessons is to move students beyond the point where they will ask the question. Certainly, if the students do not ask the question, the teacher should not bring it up. If the question is brought up, however--"Why can't we read the rest of the play in modern English, too?"--we strongly urge that the teacher not waste time verbalizing about poetic power and majesty of language and so on.[14] Satchmo is right:

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[14] Above all, do not patronize students or try to con them with text book formulas. Probably nothing turns students off so quickly and thoroughly as the sort of condescension and contempt for students' intelligence involved in statements like the following:

> Students who feel martyred at having to read Shakespeare are chastened to learn that thousands of Elizabethans, many with less schooling than high school sophomores, paid their hard-earned money and *stood for hours* to watch his plays. (Robert Ornstern, *Shakespeare in the Classroom*, Urbana, Illinois, Educational Illustrators, 1960, p. 55).

We wonder what would happen to the unchastened student who responded by asking how many Elizabethans would have paid their hard-earned money to *sit at their desks for hours* to *read* Shakespeare's plays.

all the explanations in the world won't answer the question. What is needed is to arrange things so that the students feel the difference between what Shakespeare wrote and what a modern can write.

Here is how we would try to deal with the question, if a student brought it up in our classes. (We have not touched on the matter in the lessons themselves because we would like to think that the question is answered adequately in the course of the students' experiences with the play.) We would take a section of the play, a poetic, very Shakespearean section, and give the students a paraphrase of the passage or give them the assignment of paraphrasing it in modern English. Then we would take the paraphrase and have it acted out several times, and have the same students act out the version that Shakespeare wrote. That would, we think, answer the question, though some teachers would find it profitable to systematically analyze just what--by way of imagery, richness, music, and so on--was lost in the translation.[15]

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[15] In Julius Caesar, Antony's "Cry, Havoc!" speech would be a good passage to use in such an exercise. The following is an honest attempt at a paraphrase which retains as much as possible of the sense of the original. We would suggest that a comparison of a reading of this speech with a reading of the original would be answer enough to the question, "Why Shakespeare's language?"

> Pardon me, great Caesar, that I have pretended friendship with the butchers who have slain you. It grieves me to see you there, trampled and bloody, the pitiful remains of the greatest man who ever lived.
>
> Woe to the men who have shed this costly blood! Your bleeding wounds seem to be mouths crying for revenge; and with them as my witnesses, I do promise to make the whole countryside pay for this crime. Civil war shall ravish all the parts of Italy. Blood and destruction shall be so common, and dreadful sights so ordinary, that mothers will not be shocked to see their babies butchered; so numbed will their feelings be from seeing so much horror.
>
> And your spirit, Caesar, thirsting for revenge, with hellish demons by your side, shall rise from the dead and in this country, with a kingly voice, cry, "No Quarter!"--and turn loose the dogs of war. Then this foul deed shall stink to heaven, with unburied rotting corpses.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES DURING REHEARSALS

At a number of places during the lessons, a small number of students will be rehearsing a scene, leaving the rest of the class with no definite assignment. Whether or not the student actors are able to leave the classroom, the rest of the class will have no scheduled activity.

This is a special aspect of a larger problem. Although it is hoped that at least some students will become interested enough to undertake the reading of Julius Caesar on their own, almost all the activities in these lessons take place in the classroom. This means a period of perhaps two weeks with little or no homework, which some teachers will think undesirable.

What we would suggest is that the students be given a reading assignment at the beginning of the lessons, so that the reading may serve both as homework and as an in-class activity during rehearsal time.

If the assigned reading were to deal with Julius Caesar or his times, class discussions would be enlivened by the fact that students would be coming to class armed with ideas and value judgments that differ from those expressed or implied in these lessons.

There is, of course, a wealth of historical writing about Caesar, starting with Plutarch. If there are not available adequate copies of fictional works (which most English teachers probably would prefer), histories may be suggested to students--although, as someone has pointed out, the bright tenth-grader who has had a solid world history course already knows more about Rome than Shakespeare knew.

Thornton Wilder's The Ides of March (available in paperback from Grosset and Signet) is suitable for tenth graders. Rex Warner's Young Caesar (Signet Mentor) and Imperial Caesar (Little) are already used in many schools. Theodore White's Caesar at the Rubicon (Atheneum) might be appropriate for brighter students. Less well known than these is the series of fantasy-adventures novels by Talbot Mundy in which Caesar is a figure of pure and malignant evil. (E.g., Tros of Samothrace. The whole series is being republished by Avon.) These are superior fun. The preface to Shaw's Caesar and Cleopatra, if not the play itself, would be a good assignment for better students.

Another tack might be to suggest books that deal with the themes of Caesar, but in another time--e.g., Mary Renault's

The King Must Die (Pocket Books and Vintage) or John Dos Passos' Number One (Houghton) or M. Hastings' Lee Harvey Oswald (Penguin).

We do not recommend that critical works or essays be assigned or suggested until after the lessons are completed, if at all--including those that might preface a paperback or text book edition of the play.

THE FORMAT AND USE OF THE LESSONS

§ The text printed all in double-spaced Roman capitals and justified on the left-hand margin is the "script" for the lessons. Comments and instructions are single spaced in lower-case Roman type, centered on the page. A running outline of each lesson is spaced out in italics to the right of the heavy line on each page. Major divisions of each lesson are indicated by Roman capitals to the right of the line. A good deal of white space has been left on each page for notes.

§ A copy of each piece of material for students is to be found at the end of the lesson in the course of which the material is first assigned or discussed.

§ Alternative or optional activities are indicated in the text of the lessons by a note in the text as well as in the margin, and the alternatives are separated from the rest of the text by dotted lines.

§ To avoid cluttering the pages, most notes and some additional materials are included in an appendix. Notes are indicated by an asterisk in the text. The appendix is organized by lessons, and each note is identified by a page number and a quotation of the words immediately preceding the asterisk in the text. We urge readers to consult the appendix while preparing to use the lessons.

§ Quotations from the play are from The Globe text or from the Variorum version of The First Folio. At times, for pedogogical purposes, the liberty has been taken of repunctuating certain speeches.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSIONS OF STUDENT ACTING

If experience in trying seriously to act a part, or in watching someone else act it, is essential to one's understanding what is involved in the drama, it is necessary that students should be willing, and even eager, to act. A teacher should take care not to do anything that will make acting embarrassing or painful to a student; more importantly, he should not allow other students to embarrass the actors or criticize them personally. Acting should be pleasurable, in fact, for everyone. And if the audience reacts to a funny piece of business with laughter or vocal approval, they should be given as much latitude to do so as the theatre audience has. The following rules of thumb for discussing a student performance may be helpful.

1. Always support the actors; do not allow personal criticism by other students or too harsh an evaluation of performances; it is the actor who is taking the chance and doing the work.

2. If the performance is to be discussed or evaluated, start by talking about what is good: What did you like about that? Then move on to asking: What could be improved? Would you have done it another way?

3. Begin by asking questions of the audience, not the actors. This way the actor hears about the result of his work, while the audience is reacting to the performance itself, not to the actors' explanations of what they intended the performance to be.

PRELIMINARIES

(It is possible, if the teacher thinks it desirable, to begin these lessons without mentioning Julius Caesar at all. Bruce's Dilemma, the problem presented in the next lesson, may be introduced as just an extension of the previous work with drama. Then, in the second lesson, which moves into Julius Caesar, the students may be allowed to discover for themselves that Bruce is a modern-day version of Brutus.)

AS YOU KNOW, WE ARE GOING TO READ SHAKESPEARE'S PLAY JULIUS CAESAR. BEFORE WE BEGIN TO STUDY IT, THOUGH, I WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW* SOME OF THE THINGS WE FOUND OUT EARLIER THIS YEAR ABOUT DRAMATIC LITERATURE. THEN I WOULD LIKE US TO WORK WITH ACTING AND DISCUSSING A SCENE JUST TO GET US BACK IN THE MOOD FOR READING A PLAY.

WE SAID THAT AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT IN DRAMA IS CONFLICT. AND THAT A CONFLICT EXISTS WHEN SOMEONE WANTS SOMETHING BUT THERE IS AN OBSTACLE PREVENTING HIM FROM GETTING WHAT HE WANTS.

(On the blackboard: Desire + Obstacle = Conflict.)

WE ALSO SAID THAT THE BASIC DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE DRAMATIC AND NARRATIVE WAYS OF TELLING A STORY IS THAT THE DRAMA SHOWS THE AUDIENCE WHAT IS HAPPENING, WHILE A NARRATIVE TELLS THE READER WHAT HAS HAPPENED. BECAUSE A PLAY HAPPENS BEFORE YOUR EYES, WHAT CHARACTERS DO IS SOMETIMES MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT THEY SAY OR WHAT IS SAID ABOUT THEM. AND WE SAID THAT THERE ARE TWO SORTS OF ACTIONS A CHARACTER MAY PERFORM. THE FIRST SORT ARE NECESSARY ACTIONS, WHICH ARE DICTATED BY THE DIALOGUE (OR SOMETIMES BY STAGE DIRECTIONS). THE OTHER KIND OF ACTIONS MAY VARY FROM PERFORMANCE TO PERFORMANCE, DEPENDING UPON HOW A PARTICULAR ACTOR UNDERSTANDS OR INTERPRETS HIS CHARACTER. WE CALLED THESE ACTIONS, INTERPRETIVE ACTIONS.

WE DID A NUMBER OF THINGS WITH PLAYS EARLIER--YOU EVEN WROTE A VERY SHORT PLAY, THE ONE ABOUT BEVERLY AND MR. GREEN. THIS TIME I WANT TO ASK YOU TO TRY SOMETHING MORE COMPLICATED.

BRUCE'S DILEMMA

ASSIGNMENT

ON THE SHEET I AM HANDING OUT THERE IS THE EXPLANATION OF A SITUATION INVOLVING SEVERAL CHARACTERS AND A LARGE NUMBER OF CONFLICTS. UNLIKE WHAT WE DID EARLIER, I AM NOT GOING TO ASK YOU TO CHANGE THIS NARRATIVE INTO A DRAMA.

(1)

(Hand out "Bruce's Dilemma.")*

RATHER, I AM GOING TO ASK ALL OF YOU TO HELP WRITE A DRAMATIC SCENE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THE CHARACTERS DESCRIBED IN THIS NARRATIVE GET TOGETHER.

Dilemma

FIRST, LET'S LOOK AT THE TITLE. "BRUCE'S DILEMMA." A DILEMMA IS WHAT?

(If no one responds at once, give the definition.)

A DILEMMA IS A SITUATION IN WHICH ONE HAS TO MAKE A CHOICE BETWEEN EQUALLY BAD ALTERNATIVES. FOR INSTANCE, WHEN THE HERO IN A WESTERN EITHER HAS TO SHOOT THE WISE-GUY KID OR HAVE EVERYBODY CALL HIM A COWARD, HE IS FACED WITH A DILEMMA. OR WHEN A MAN EITHER HAS TO STAY ON A TRESTLE AND GET HIT BY A TRAIN OR JUMP OFF INTO A CANYON, HE HAS A PRETTY SERIOUS DILEMMA.

(Read through "Bruce's Dilemma" with the students.)

Read "Bruce's Dilemma"

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BRUCE'S DILEMMA

Mr. King is an English teacher at William Bard High School, who is very popular with some of his students, although he has a reputation for being an extremely tough grader. (He has been known to fail more than half of a class on a test.) Mr. King is also known to have an intense dislike for football, which he thinks takes up too much time.

On the Monday after the first football game, Mr. King gave his senior class a test, and all the football players in the class failed it. He has announced that he will give an even harder test the following Monday, even though the football team will be gone for several days on a road trip to play Carthage High School.

Some members of the football team are convinced that Mr. King is giving the test just so that he can fail them. (Whether that is really Mr. King's reason is beside the point.) They also know that if they fail another test, they will become ineligible for football.

The players get together, under the leadership of Cass, the halfback, and decide that, since they are being treated unfairly, they have a right to defend themselves. Someone suggests that they should get a copy of Mr. King's test,* so that they will be able to work out the right answers by Monday. The test, however, will be in a locked file, and the boys are not willing to do something as serious as committing a burglary. This means they will have to get the help of someone who has access to Mr. King's files and who can make a copy of the test.

There are only two students who, because they are working with Mr. King on the school yearbook, have access to the files. One of the students, Andy, cannot be approached because he is Mr. King's favorite and would immediately report the players to Mr. King. The other student, Bruce, is the top student in the school and the quarterback of the football team. Bruce has no personal reason for wanting a copy of the test beforehand: he is a straight A student and is not in Mr. King's English class.

The football players decide that they will try to persuade Bruce to join their conspiracy, since they feel sure that even if he will not help them, he will not report them.

Assume that the conspirators know that the following things are true of Bruce. His two most important motivations are to maintain the prestige that he has in the school and to do whatever he can to help improve school spirit and the school's reputation. Bruce is also the sort of person who thinks it is very important to be popular with the "right" students and does not like to make anyone unhappy with him. (He has seen students cheating in the past and has not told on them.) Also, although Bruce likes and respects Mr. King, he has been heard to say that he believes Mr. King is out to get the football players. They also know that Bruce talks out his problems with his girlfriend, Peggy, and that Peggy is extremely honest and will urge Bruce not to get mixed up in anything illegal.

What will happen when the conspirators approach Bruce with their plans for stealing the test? What sort of arguments will they use?

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WHEN THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS CONFRONT BRUCE, HE WILL FACE THIS DILEMMA: IF HE STEALS THE TEST, HE MAY RUIN HIS REPUTATION WITH THE TEACHERS. IF HE DOES NOT STEAL THE TEST, HE WILL RUIN HIS REPUTATION WITH HIS FRIENDS.

NOW LET'S START TO DISCUSS THE SCENE. THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS ARE GOING TO GET TOGETHER WITH BRUCE SOMEWHERE, TELL HIM WHAT THEY WANT HIM TO DO, AND TRY TO GET HIM TO COOPERATE WITH THEM. NEAR THE END OF WHAT WE JUST READ, WE LEARNED SEVERAL THINGS ABOUT BRUCE. AND WE ARE ASSUMING THAT THE CONSPIRATORS KNOW THE SAME THINGS.

THEY WILL PLAN A STRATEGY WHICH WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THOSE ATTITUDES OF BRUCE'S WHICH WOULD INCLINE HIM TO HELP THEM. I WANT US TO WORK UP THE SCENE THAT WILL SHOW THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS TRYING TO CONVINCE BRUCE TO STEAL THE TEST PAPERS.

LET US DECIDE ON A SETTING FIRST. WHERE WILL THE SCENE TAKE PLACE?

Setting

(Let the students decide on a place.)

NEXT, HOW MANY CHARACTERS DO THERE NEED TO BE IN THE SCENE? BRUCE, OF COURSE, AND CASS, WHO WILL BE THE LEADER OF THE CONSPIRATORS. AND HOW MANY OTHERS?

Number of characters

(Again, let the students decide--probably five or six "extras" will be enough, however.)

IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS IN REAL LIFE, WOULD IT PROBABLY BE MORE EFFECTIVE FOR ONE PERSON, LIKE CASS, TO DO MOST OF THE TALKING TO BRUCE, OR FOR ALL OF THE CONSPIRATORS TO TALK IN TURN. WHICH STRATEGY WOULD BE MORE LIKELY TO GET RESULTS?

Strategy

(Let the students discuss this and reach a decision. Let them choose any strategy they want. Their choice will have a good deal to do with the sort of scene that finally is produced. Later on, you may wish to remind them that they may change or revise their first decision. Like any other playwright, they have the option of tearing up what they have written and starting over.)

I WANT US TO BEGIN TO DECIDE WHAT THE CHARACTERS IN THIS SCENE WOULD DO AND SAY WHEN THEY MEET. I AM NOT CONCERNED, AND NEITHER SHOULD YOU BE, WITH WHAT THE

What will happen?

CHARACTERS SHOULD DO. THE PROBLEM IS TO CREATE THE DIALOGUE THAT WOULD TAKE PLACE. SO DO NOT GET SIDE-TRACKED INTO DISCUSSING MORAL ISSUES.

No moral issues

IN THE SCENE AS WE HAVE IT, THERE ARE NO STRICTLY MORAL CONFLICTS. THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS HAVE ALREADY DECIDED THAT THEY HAVE A RIGHT TO GET THE TEST IF THEY CAN. BRUCE'S CONSCIENCE WILL NOT BOTHER HIM IF HE TAKES THE TEST: ALL HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT IS WHAT PEOPLE THINK OF HIM. HIS PROBLEM IS TO DECIDE WHOSE OPINION HE CARES MOST ABOUT--THE ADULTS OR THE STUDENTS. LET US JUST ASSUME THIS IS THE SORT OF PERSON BRUCE IS AND NOT WORRY ABOUT WHETHER HE SHOULD BE THAT WAY OR NOT.

(This insistence on Bruce's being other-directed is to focus the students' attention on the dramatic problem, so that they will not be side-tracked into the easier but less relevant task of volleying ethical prejudices back and forth. There is definitely no intention of suggesting that conscience and morality are unimportant to the Brutus in Shakespeare's play, or to the students.)

Analysis of conflicts

LET US GO ON WITH THAT FOR A MINUTE. I HAVE JUST SAID THAT BRUCE DOES NOT HAVE A CONFLICT WITH HIS CONSCIENCE. BUT HE DOES HAVE OTHER CONFLICTS. I THINK THE NEXT THING WE SHOULD DO, BEFORE WE TRY TO WORK UP THIS SCENE, IS TO SEE JUST WHAT CONFLICTS WILL BE PRESENT IN IT THAT CAN MAKE IT DRAMATIC.

Desire + obstacle conflict

REMEMBER WHAT WAS SAID EARLIER. EVERY SCENE THAT IS DRAMATIC INVOLVES CONFLICT. A CONFLICT OCCURS WHEN A CHARACTER WANTS SOMETHING, BUT AN OBSTACLE OF SOME SORT PREVENTS HIM FROM GETTING IT. WHAT SORT OF OBSTACLE IS PRESENT DETERMINES WHAT SORT OF CONFLICT THERE IS. WHAT, BY THE WAY, WERE THE THREE TYPES OF CONFLICTS WE TALKED ABOUT?

3 types of conflict

(Man against nature, person against person, man against himself.)

Conspirator

START WITH THE CONSPIRATORS. WHAT DO THEY WANT?

(To get a copy of the test.)

WHAT IS KEEPING THEM FROM GETTING THE TEST?

(Bruce is the only one who can get it for them, and he has not agreed to do so.)

ARE THERE ANY INNER CONFLICTS AS FAR AS THE CONSPIRATORS ARE CONCERNED?

(No. Earlier, there may have been, if the conspirators were concerned about the morality of getting the test or the danger of getting caught. But these conflicts have already been resolved.)

ARE THERE ANY NATURAL OR PHYSICAL CONFLICTS?

(No. The tests are in a locked file, which is a physical obstacle; but the conspirators have already resolved that conflict by deciding they will not try to break into the file.)

SO FROM THE CONSPIRATORS' POINT OF VIEW THE CONFLICT IS A SIMPLE PERSON-TO-PERSON CONFLICT. THEY WANT THE TEST. BRUCE IS THE OBSTACLE. TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICT IN THEIR FAVOR, THEY HAVE TO GET BRUCE TO AGREE TO HELP THEM. EVERYTHING THEY DO IN THE SCENE WILL BE DONE BECAUSE THEY THINK IT WILL HELP TO GET BRUCE ON THEIR SIDE.

Conspirators' motivation

HOW ABOUT BRUCE? HIS SITUATION IS MORE COMPLICATED. WHAT THINGS DOES BRUCE WANT? WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THERE ARE TWO THINGS BRUCE ESPECIALLY WANTS. THE FIRST IS TO MAINTAIN HIS REPUTATION, BOTH WITH THE STUDENTS AND THE TEACHERS. THE SECOND IS TO DO WHATEVER WILL BE BEST FOR THE SCHOOL. AND OBVIOUSLY HE MIGHT THINK THAT WEAKENING THE FOOTBALL TEAM WOULD NOT BE GOOD FOR THE SCHOOL.

Bruce's conflicts

Desires

WHY WOULD BRUCE'S DESIRE TO MAINTAIN HIS REPUTATION INVOLVE A CONFLICT?

Obstacles

(With the prompting they have been given, the students should be able to point out quickly that the action which will make Bruce popular with the conspirators might ruin his reputation with the school authorities. But doing what he knows the teachers would approve of will cost him the friendship of the students. If necessary, use additional questions to bring this out.

Again, if students begin to moralize about what Bruce should do, remind them that Bruce's character is a given part of the situation, and that the question of whether his character is good or bad is, at this point, irrelevant.)

WHAT SORT OF CONFLICT IS THIS ONE THAT BRUCE IS INVOLVED IN?

(An inner conflict. But there are elements of other sorts of conflicts in it, and students should be allowed to argue about it. No conclusion should be imposed.)

WE KNOW THAT BRUCE WANTS TO DO WHAT IS BEST FOR THE SCHOOL.

WHAT IS THE OBSTACLE TO HIS DOING WHAT IS BEST?

(He does not know what is best. He is confused. Both the football team and Mr. King are "school." But what is good for one is bad for the other.)

WHAT SORT OF CONFLICT IS THIS?

(Again, an inner conflict.)

WILL BRUCE BE INVOLVED IN ANY OTHER CONFLICTS WHEN HE IS APPROACHED BY THE FOOTBALL PLAYERS?

Other confli

(A number of conflicts might be mentioned, all of them related to the major conflicts. Accept all student suggestions which do not ignore the given facts in the situation. These might include suggestions such as the following:

He wants to help the players, but he is afraid of getting caught.

He wants to do whatever he can to keep the players' friendship, but he looks down on them because they are not bright enough to get by without cheating.

He wants to be loyal to Mr. King, but he thinks Mr. King is using his power unfairly.

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ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES

The next step in the lesson is the creating of the dramatic scene. The way this step should be handled will depend on the make-up of the class.

Three procedures are outlined below, so that you may choose the one best suited to students in a particular class.

I

ALTERNATIVE ONE

(If the class is highly verbal, or especially liked the acting portions of the earlier lessons, six or seven students may be assigned to play the conspirators and allowed to get together to plan their strategy for convincing Bruce to join them. The conspirators may include girls; if the students object to this as unrealistic, cast the girls as the football players' girl friends.

If there are two extremely competent students in the class, they should be asked to play Bruce and Cass, with Cass being put in charge of the conspirators, to act as director.

The conspirators can either go to another room to formulate their plans or quietly "conspire" at the back of the classroom.

While the actors are rehearsing, the rest of the class may be asked to read in books assigned earlier. Or if the conspirators are able to leave the classroom to rehearse, you may wish to set the following problem to the remainder of the class.*

Ask them to assume that Bruce will leave the conspirators before he gives them his decision. Then ask them how a playwright might go about dramatizing Bruce's internal conflict or of revealing Bruce's eventual decision. The students may be asked to discuss the question or to write on it. If they write, several of the papers should be referred to before Brutus' soliloquy is read.

Basically, there are two ways the conflict could be dramatized--by soliloquy or by the introduction of another character. But the purpose of the question is to involve the students who are not acting in a consideration of a practical dramatic problem.

Just before you return to the scene being rehearsed, tell the student who is to play Bruce he is not to reach a decision during the scene. Instruct him to tell the conspirators he has to go and will let them have his decision later. Have him end the scene in this way after 3-5 minutes or when he feels the scene is beginning to drag.

This stipulation--that Bruce does not reach a decision--is to assure that the scene parallels the Cassius-Brutus scene in Act I. Each student will later be asked to deal with Bruce's decision in writing.

When the conspirators have planned what they will say, they confront Bruce with their arguments for the first time in front of the class.

The scene thus produced will have a strong element of improvisation and spontaneity--an excitement of a sort student actors cannot get any other way. But the demands it makes upon the actors are great, and the scene could drag horribly if the actors cannot think and speak on their feet.

If possible, a tape recording should be made of the scene.)

II

ALTERNATI
TWO

(The second alternative requires that there be a separate area outside the classroom where the conspirators can go to discuss the best way to approach Bruce. While the conspirators are out of the room, the class--with the student playing Bruce present--can discuss the possible arguments the conspirators might use and the sorts of replies Bruce might make.

Again, the initial confrontation between Bruce and the conspirators will take place before the class but with this alternative the student playing Bruce will have had a better chance to consider how he can respond to the conspirators. As in alternative one, he should be instructed not to reach a decision during the scene. A tape recording should be made of the scene, so it may be played back to encourage analysis.

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III

ALTERNATIVE THREE

(For a class that does not have students in it strong enough to ad lib the leading roles, the best procedure will probably be to discuss the scene in class, allowing the actors to listen to class suggestions of strategy and business, and then all go off together--Bruce and the conspirators--to plan the scene, perhaps under your direction or under the direction of a student you appoint.

As in the first procedure, the other students will read or talk. Instructions on how to end the scene may be given to Bruce privately or to the whole group.

There will still be an element of improvisation in a scene created in this way, but smaller demands will be placed upon the individual actors. The scene should be recorded.)

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Discussion of performance

(After the scene is acted before the class, the tape should be played once and the performance discussed in the manner familiar from the earlier lessons. In anticipation of the direction that will be taken later in these lessons, you may wish to emphasize dialogue and business that reveal character. For instance, if one "conspirator" offers to bribe Bruce or threatens him, point out to the class--or have them point out--that his words simultaneously tell us

1. what he thinks about Bruce and 2. something about his own values. Then, Bruce's reaction to the bribe or the threat tells us both 1. something about Bruce and 2. something about the accuracy of the other character's perceptions of Bruce.

Whether it will be profitable to rework or polish the scene will depend on the class, and you must make the decision on the basis of the performance. If, for instance, the tape is incomprehensible because too many actors are speaking at once, the scene might be redone. On the other hand, if the scene is very effective the first time, it might be played again, after discussion, to see if it can be enriched.

Whether or not the scene is to be acted again, students should be encouraged during the discussion to suggest improvements and additions and allowed to act out their suggestions if they desire.)

How will conflict resolved?

WE DELIBERATELY ENDED THE SCENE WITHOUT RESOLVING THE CONFLICT. WE LEFT OPEN THE QUESTION OF WHAT BRUCE WOULD DECIDE TO DO. WILL HE STEAL THE TEST OR NOT? LET US ASSUME THE SCENE WE HAVE JUST DONE HAS BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL. A GREAT DEAL OF SUSPENSE HAS BEEN CREATED, THE AUDIENCE WANTS TO KNOW WHAT BRUCE WILL DO. YOU ARE STILL PLAYWRIGHTS. WHAT WOULD BE A DRAMATIC WAY OF REVEALING TO THE AUDIENCE WHAT BRUCE'S DECISION IS GOING TO BE? YOU COULD PROBABLY THINK OF ANY NUMBER OF GOOD WAYS.

How reveal Bruce's decision?

(If students wrote earlier on ways of dramatizing the resolution of Bruce's conflict, refer to some of the papers at this point.)

Bruce and Peggy

BUT LET ME SUGGEST A WAY IT MIGHT BE DONE. IMAGINE THAT THERE IS A SCENE, FOLLOWING THE ONE WE'VE JUST DONE, IN WHICH BRUCE'S GIRL FRIEND, PEGGY, BEGS HIM NOT TO GET INVOLVED IN STEALING THE TEST. BRUCE WANTS PEGGY TO RESPECT HIM, AND THIS MAKES HIS DILEMMA EVEN HARDER TO RESOLVE. AND MORE DRAMATIC, ALSO, SINCE MORE IS AT STAKE NOW.*

Writing assignment: Bruce's note

WE ALREADY KNOW BRUCE DOES NOT LIKE TO HURT ANYONE'S FEELINGS. HOWEVER, HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO DISAPPOINT SOMEONE: EITHER PEGGY OR THE PLAYERS. IF HE DECIDES NOT TO STEAL THE TEST, HE WON'T WANT TO FACE CASS OR HIS TEAMMATES WHEN HE LETS THEM KNOW, AND HE WON'T WANT TO FACE HIS GIRL FRIEND IF HE DECIDES TO GO ALONG WITH THE CONSPIRATORS.

SO LET US IMAGINE HE DECIDES THE BEST WAY TO DO THINGS IS TO WRITE A NOTE TO WHICHEVER PERSON HIS DECISION WILL DISPLEASE--CASS OR HIS GIRL FRIEND. THERE COULD BE A SCENE IN WHICH BRUCE ARGUES WITH HIMSELF, SO THE AUDIENCE WOULD KNOW HOW HIS MIND WAS WORKING. BUT WHETHER THAT SCENE WERE WRITTEN OR NOT, THE SCENE IN WHICH BRUCE'S NOTE WAS READ COULD BE A DRAMATIC ONE, SAY, WHEN CASS READS THE NOTE ALOUD TO THE OTHER CONSPIRATORS, OR WHEN PEGGY CONFIDES IN HER GIRL FRIEND. WHATEVER BRUCE DECIDES, IT COULD START A WHOLE NEW CHAIN OF CONFLICTS.

ANYWAY, LET US ASSUME BRUCE HAS DECIDED TO WRITE A NOTE AND LEAVE IT IN A LOCKER. HERE IS WHAT I WANT YOU TO DO: WRITE BRUCE'S NOTE. FIRST, DECIDE WHO HE

IS GOING TO HAVE TO WRITE THE NOTE TO. IF YOU THINK, AFTER SEEING OUR SCENE, THAT BRUCE WOULD DECIDE TO HELP STEAL THE TEST, HE WILL HAVE TO WRITE A NOTE TO HIS GIRL FRIEND, PEGGY, EXPLAINING WHY HE DECIDED TO STEAL IT. ON THE OTHER HAND, IF YOU DECIDE HE WILL CHOOSE NOT TO STEAL THE TEST, BRUCE WILL HAVE TO WRITE A NOTE TO CASS, EXPLAINING WHY HE IS NOT GOING TO HELP.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT IS TO WRITE A NOTE FOR BRUCE EXPLAINING WHY HE IS OR IS NOT GOING TO STEAL THE TEST. REMEMBER, YOU ARE BRUCE. THE REASONS YOU GIVE SHOULD BE REASONS THAT BRUCE--AS YOU KNOW HIM--MIGHT GIVE. IT WOULD BE ILLOGICAL, FOR INSTANCE, FOR BRUCE SUDDENLY TO TURN AROUND AND WRITE CASS A LITTLE SERMON ABOUT THE EVILS OF THIEVERY, BECAUSE THE BRUCE WE HAVE COME TO KNOW DOESN'T WORRY ABOUT SUCH THINGS VERY MUCH.

(Make sure the students understand the assignment before they begin to write. Make it clear they should be writing dramatically--putting Bruce's thoughts on paper, not their own. It might even be suggested to them that the assignment will be more challenging if they undertake to write arguments in favor of Bruce's doing just exactly what they think he should not do.

If it can be so timed, the assignment should be given as homework. If not, the students should be given as much time in class as they seem to be able to use profitably.

Collect the papers when the students are finished.

Discussion o
letters

Begin to read some of the notes--a few to Cass and a few to Peggy. Ask for student comments and discussion, but do not try too much to guide it. If they will, allow the students to begin to argue. about whether Bruce would say so-and-so or do such-and-such and why.

After this discussion, the class will be asked to jump into Julius Caesar, so any excitement that can be generated here is good. If the papers have been written in class, it may be possible--and would be good--to continue the discussion until the end of the period and get to Julius Caesar at the beginning of the next period.

These papers may be marked and returned as any other writing assignment might be. If you think it would be profitable for the papers to be rewritten, such an assignment might best be made at the end of these lessons, so that the revisions could serve as at least a rough measure of learning.

Just before the end of the period, ask the students to bring their copies of Julius Caesar to the next class meeting.)

BRUCE'S DILEMMA

Mr. King is an English teacher at William Bard High School, who is very popular with some of his students, although he has a reputation for being an extremely tough grader. (He has been known to fail more than half of a class on a test.) Mr. King is also known to have an intense dislike for football, which he thinks takes up too much time.

On the Monday after the first football game, Mr. King gave his senior class a test, and all the football players in the class failed it. He has announced that he will give an even harder test the following Monday, even though the football team will be gone for several days on a road trip to play Carthage High School.

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What will happen when the conspirators approach Bruce with their plans for stealing the test? What sort of arguments will they use?

BRUTUS' SOLILOQUY

(It is possible to skip much of this opening dialogue by handing out and reading over the plot outline of the play. This is the procedure that will be necessary if you have chosen to allow the students to "discover" the parallelism between Bruce's and Brutus' dilemmas.)

BEFORE WE GO FURTHER, LET ME EXPLAIN WHY I HAVE INTRODUCED SHAKESPEARE'S JULIUS CAESAR BY MEANS OF A LONG DISCUSSION OF FOOTBALL PLAYERS PLANNING TO STEAL A TEST.

A GREAT MANY STUDENTS ARE SIMPLY SO BEWILDERED BY SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE, AND SO ANNOYED BY HAVING TO KEEP LOOKING AT FOOTNOTES, THAT THEY NEVER FIND OUT WHAT THERE IS ABOUT SHAKESPEARE THAT HAS KEPT HIS PLAYS ALIVE FOR ALMOST FOUR HUNDRED YEARS.

AFTER ALL, IF YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE OF A PLAY, YOU CANNOT TELL WHAT IS GOING ON OR WHAT THE CHARACTERS ARE LIKE, AND YOU CERTAINLY CANNOT FEEL ANY OF THE EXCITEMENT OF THE PLAY.

SHAKESPEARE'S LANGUAGE IS UNFAMILIAR BECAUSE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS CONSTANTLY CHANGING, AND IT HAS CHANGED A GOOD DEAL SINCE 1600, WHEN SHAKESPEARE WAS WRITING HIS PLAYS. ON TOP OF THAT, MUCH OF SHAKESPEARE'S

DIALOGUE IS IN VERSE, WHICH MEANS THAT HIS GRAMMAR IS OFTEN COMPLICATED AND THE LANGUAGE IS FULL OF ELABORATE WORD PICTURES OF A SORT WE SELDOM FIND IN MODERN WRITING.

HOWEVER, IF YOU HAVE SEEN SHAKESPEARE ON THE STAGE OR IN THE MOVIES OR ON TV, YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN FOLLOW HIS STORIES WITHOUT DICTIONARIES AND FOOTNOTES.

SO THE APPROACH TO SHAKESPEARE THAT I AM TAKING IS FIRST TO CONCENTRATE ON THE MOST VITAL CONFLICTS IN THE PLAY, ON THE CHARACTERS, AND ON THEIR ACTIONS. THEN, AFTER WE HAVE FAMILIARIZED OURSELVES WITH THESE THINGS ABOUT THE PLAY, WE WILL BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF READING THE PLAY IN SHAKESPEAREAN ENGLISH.

WE ALREADY KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE CONFLICTS, FROM DISCUSSING BRUCE'S DILEMMA. NOW LET'S TRY TO LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT THE MAJOR CHARACTERS.

MOST OF YOU ALREADY KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT CAESAR FROM HISTORY CLASSES. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CAESAR?

(Call on students to summarize the salient facts. For the purposes of these lessons, very little time needs to be spent on historical background.

For instance, it might be enough to establish that Caesar was a great Roman general who lived in the first century B. C.; that Rome was an aristocratic republic until Caesar's assassination, but that afterwards it became a monarchy--the Roman Empire.

Allow the students to contribute what they know about Caesar and his times, but do not get sidetracked into detailed examination of Roman history and politics.

Before beginning to relate Julius Caesar to "Bruce's dilemma," hand out the scene-by-scene outline of the play. Ask the students to read it carefully or read over it with them in class.

Hand out synopsis (2) located at end of the lesson

If you have begun this lesson with the discussion of Shakespeare's language and an acknowledgement that the situation in Bruce's Dilemma was parallel to the Brutus' situation in Caesar, proceed with the dialogue below. If you decided to let your students "discover" the relationship on their own, this is where they should do it. More than likely someone will comment on the parallel without being prodded. However, if no one does, ask directly, "Does this situation sound familiar? Is it anything like Bruce's dilemma?"

WHAT SIMILARITIES ARE THERE BETWEEN BRUCE'S POSITION AND BRUTUS' POSITION IN ACT I, SCENE ii OF THE PLAY?

(Both are well respected. Both have a great love for their school or country, etc. But most important, both are an obstacle for the conspirators.)

ONE OTHER SIMILARITY IN THE SITUATIONS WE ACTED AND THE ONE OUTLINED HERE IS THAT, THE END OF THE SCENE, THE AUDIENCE DOES NOT HEAR DIRECTLY FROM BRUCE OR BRUTUS WHAT HE HAS DECIDED OR WHY. IN REVEALING BRUCE'S DECISION WE DECIDED TO USE A LETTER TO PEGGY OR CASS; SHAKESPEARE DECIDED TO USE A SOLILOQUY, A SCENE IN WHICH BRUTUS APPEARS ALONE ON THE STAGE

AND "THINKS" HIS THOUGHTS ALOUD. THE SOLILOQUY IS IN THE FIRST SCENE OF THE SECOND ACT.

(You may wish to define and explain a soliloquy more fully at this point.)

I WANT US TO READ OVER THE SOLILOQUY VERY CAREFULLY, TO DECIDE WHAT THE SOLILOQUY MAY TELL US ABOUT BRUTUS, AND ALSO TO SEE HOW A PLAYWRIGHT MAY USE SUCH A SCENE BOTH TO CONVEY INFORMATION AND TO REVEAL CHARACTER.

IN THIS SOLILOQUY, SHAKESPEARE IS DOING FOR BRUTUS ABOUT WHAT EACH OF YOU DID FOR BRUCE WHEN YOU WROTE HIS NOTE. IF THE ONLY PURPOSE OF THE SPEECH WERE TO TELL THE AUDIENCE WHAT BRUTUS HAD DECIDED, THAT PURPOSE COULD HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED IN A SINGLE LINE--"I'LL DO IT!" BUT BY LETTING US GET A GLIMPSE OF BRUTUS' MIND AT WORK, SHAKESPEARE ENABLES US TO UNDERSTAND HIM BETTER AND TO UNDERSTAND BETTER HIS ACTIONS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE PLAY.

THE INFORMATION ABOUT BRUTUS IN A SOLILOQUY LIKE THIS, BY THE WAY, WOULD HELP AN ACTOR OR A DIRECTOR UNDERSTAND BRUTUS BETTER AND GIVE HIM SOME ASSISTANCE IN DECIDING HOW THE CHARACTER SHOULD BE PLAYED.

BEFORE LOOKING AT THIS SOLILOQUY, WE MIGHT NOTICE ONE MORE THING. THE PERSON SITTING IN THE AUDIENCE AT

A PERFORMANCE OF JULIUS CAESAR IS NOT ABLE TO ANALYZE A SCENE THE WAY A READER OR AN ACTOR CAN. HE ONLY HAS TIME TO FORM AN IMPRESSION AND THEN SOMETHING ELSE IS HAPPENING TO WHICH HE MUST PAY ATTENTION. IF THE ACTOR IS SKILLFUL ENOUGH, HE WILL HAVE INVENTED WAYS OF GIVING THE AUDIENCE A GREAT DEAL OF INFORMATION OF THE SORT ONE CAN GET BY CAREFULLY REREADING A SCENE AND STUDYING IT, BUT THERE STILL IS A GREAT DEAL IN A SHAKESPEAREAN PLAY THAT CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD BY READING. ONCE ONE HAS CAREFULLY READ A SHAKESPEAREAN PLAY, HOWEVER, HE WILL BE MUCH MORE SENSITIVE TO WHAT IS GOING ON ON THE STAGE WHEN HE DOES SEE A PERFORMANCE OF THE PLAY.

Brutus' soliloquy

BUT LET'S LOOK AT BRUTUS' SOLILOQUY. BRUTUS IS IN HIS GARDEN. IT IS THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT OF MARCH 14, THE NIGHT BEFORE THE DAY THAT THE CONSPIRATORS PLAN TO ASSASSINATE CAESAR. BRUTUS CANNOT SLEEP. WALKING IN THE GARDEN, HE REASONS WITH HIMSELF IN THE FOLLOWING WAY. IT BEGINS AT LINE 10, ACT II, SCENE 1.

First reading

(Ask the students to follow the speech in their textbooks. Do not try to act this speech, just read it slowly and clearly.

The following version of the soliloquy is punctuated slightly differently from any standard text, with the intention of giving a clearer indication of necessary pauses and emphases.)

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BRUTUS' SOLILOQUY

"It must be by his death.

And for my part, I know no personal cause to spurn at him, but for the general.

He would be crowned. How that might change his nature: there's the question. It is the bright day that brings forth the adder, and that craves wary walking. Crown him? That--and then, I grant we put a sting in him that at his will he may do danger with.

The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins remorse from power. And, to speak truth of Caesar, I have not known when his affection swayed more than his reason.

But 'tis a common proof, that lowliness is young ambition's ladder, whereto the climber upward turns his face; but when he once attains the upmost round, he then unto the ladder turns his back, looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees by which he did ascend.

So Caesar may: then, lest he may, prevent.

And since the quarrel will bear no color for the thing he is, fashion it thus: that what he is, augmented, would run to these, and these extremities. And therefore think him as a serpent's egg, which hatched, would as his kind grow mischievous: and kill kim in the shell!"

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(The following commentary on the soliloquy is intended to clarify some of the difficult parts of it and to call attention to the way Brutus' mind is working, so as to encourage student speculation about his character and personality.

If you wish, additional analyses may be made. For example, it could be pointed out that the reading ot the first six words of the speech could be done in a number of ways, depending on one's understanding of Brutus.

"It MUST be by his death." [Brutus is mainly concerned with the inevitability of his actions.]

"It must be by his DEATH." [Brutus is mainly concerned with the nature of the act.]

"It must be by HIS death." [Brutus is mainly concerned with his relationship to Caesar, remembers Cassius suggesting suicide as a way to escape Caesar's power.]

And so on.

The following, rather unflattering, interpretation of Brutus' character need not be allowed to stand unchallenged by the students. No one in the play, after all, questions Brutus' nobility. At the conclusion of these lessons, the students may be asked to return to this scene, either to reinterpret it in the light of what is learned elsewhere in the play, or consider it as an element in the portrayal of a man in whom the elements were mixed.

The analysis of the soliloquy is, as written, pretty much a teacher monologue. This is because, although the information in the speech is vital to our purposes, we do not wish to force the students to grapple with fairly complex Shakespearean language so early in the lessons. Therefore, the teacher does the work, presenting a paraphrase of the soliloquy as he comments on it.

Although this method will get through the speech quickly, many teachers will probably prefer to break the monologue by asking occasional questions. We leave it to each teacher to decide when a statement should be made into a question, but we recommend that the students not yet be called on to interpret the imagery or to use the notes to transform Shakespearean statements into modern English.)

Commentary on the soliloquy

BRUTUS BEGINS, "IT MUST BE BY HIS DEATH." HE IS NOT, IN THIS SPEECH, TRYING TO REACH A DECISION. HE HAS ALREADY DECIDED CAESAR MUST BE KILLED. HE STARTS WITH THE CONCLUSION AND THEN REVIEWS THE REASONS FOR REACHING IT. ANYONE MIGHT DO THIS, IF HE WERE EXPLAINING A DECISION TO SOMEONE ELSE. BUT WHAT SORT OF PERSON CARRIES ON SUCH A DIALOGUE WITH HIMSELF? WE'LL TRY TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION LATER, WHEN WE'VE READ THE REST OF THE SOLILOQUY.

Impersonal motives

BRUTUS CONTINUES, "FOR MY PART, I KNOW NO CAUSE TO SPURN AT HIM, BUT FOR THE GENERAL." THAT IS, I HAVE NO PERSONAL REASON FOR WANTING CAESAR DEAD--I DO NOT HATE HIM AND I HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN FROM HIS DEATH--MY ONLY MOTIVE IS A CONCERN FOR THE GENERAL WELFARE, THE GOOD OF ROME.

"HE WOULD BE CROWNED," BRUTUS CONTINUES. WOULD HERE MEANS WISHES TO OR INTENDS: "CAESAR INTENDS TO BE CROWNED KING." THEN BRUTUS ASKS HIMSELF WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN IF CAESAR WERE TO BECOME KING. "HOW THAT MIGHT CHANGE HIS NATURE: THERE'S THE QUESTION. IT IS THE BRIGHT DAY THAT BRINGS FORTH THE ADDER, AND THAT CRAVES WARY WALKING." IN THE SAME WAY A WARM SUNNY DAY BRINGS OUT SNAKES, BRUTUS IS SUGGESTING, SOMETHING POISONOUS IN CAESAR'S NATURE MIGHT BE BROUGHT OUT ON THE "BRIGHT DAY" ON WHICH HE WAS CROWNED KING.

Caesar potentially harmful

THEN BRUTUS CONTINUES THE COMPARISON. IN SHAKESPEARE'S TIME, A POISONOUS SNAKE WAS OFTEN SAID TO HAVE A "STING," THOUGH WE TEND TO USE THE WORD TODAY ONLY WITH INSECTS. BRUTUS COMPARES GIVING A CROWN TO A KING TO GIVING FANGS TO A SNAKE, SINCE BOTH INVOLVE THE DANGER OF THE MISUSE OF POWER TO DO HARM. "CROWN HIM? THAT--AND THEN, I GRANT WE PUT A STING IN HIM THAT AT HIS WILL HE MAY DO DANGER WITH."

Brutus' reasoning is theoretical

THEN BRUTUS MAKES A SORT OF GENERAL PHILOSOPHICAL STATEMENT ABOUT POLITICAL POWER. "THE ABUSE

OF GREATNESS IS, WHEN IT DISJOINS REMORSE FROM POWER." WE WOULD SAY SOMETHING LIKE, "GREAT POWER IS ABUSED WHEN ITS EXERCISE IS NOT CONTROLLED BY CONSCIENCE," OR "MEN WITH GREAT POWER ABUSE IT WHEN THEY STOP WORRYING ABOUT THE HARM THEIR ACTIONS DO TO OTHER PEOPLE."

WE WOULD ALL AGREE THAT WHAT BRUTUS SAYS IS TRUE, I THINK: POWER OFTEN IS ABUSED. BUT BRUTUS IS SETTING OUT THE REASONS CAESAR MUST BE KILLED. WHAT HAS BRUTUS' REMARK TO DO WITH CAESAR? "TO SPEAK TRUTH OF CAESAR, I HAVE NOT KNOWN WHEN HIS AFFECTION"--THAT IS, HIS EMOTIONS OR HIS DESIRES--"SWAYED MORE THAN HIS REASON"--AND REASON HERE SEEMS TO MEAN MORAL REASON OR CONSCIENCE.

Caesar's actions are blameless

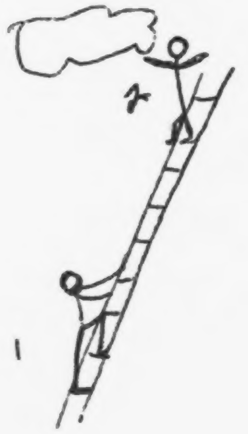
REMEMBER, CAESAR ALREADY HAS GREAT POWER. HE IS DICTATOR OF ROME. HE IS NOT KING, BUT FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, HE HAS THE POWER OF A KING AND HAS HAD IT FOR SOME TIME. AND BRUTUS IS UNABLE TO THINK OF AN INSTANCE WHERE CAESAR ABUSED HIS POWER.

SO IF HE CANNOT FIND REASONS IN CAESAR'S CONDUCT, HE MUST LOOK ELSEWHERE: AT THE POSSIBLE CONDUCT OF SOMEONE IN CAESAR'S POSITION. IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE, HE SAYS, THAT AMBITIOUS PEOPLE OFTEN ACT HUMBLE BEFORE THEY GAIN POWER: BUT THEN, AFTER THEY HAVE POWER, THEY BECOME PROUD, AND SCORN THE QUALITY THAT HELPED THEM CLIMB TO THE TOP.

Caesar may misuse a king's power

"BUT 'TIS A COMMON PROOF, THAT LOWLINESS IS YOUNG AMBITION'S LADDER, WHERETO THE CLIMBER UPWARD TURNS HIS FACE; BUT WHEN HE ONCE ATTAINS THE UPMOST ROUND, HE THEN UNTO THE LADDER TURNS HIS BACK, LOOKS IN THE CLOUDS, SCORNING THE BASE DEGREES BY WHICH HE DID ASCEND."*

(If you wish, the figure in this last section of the speech may easily be represented by a diagram on the blackboard.)



Humility (lowliness)
= the ladder

YOUNG AMBITION MAY ACT THIS WAY, BRUTUS SAYS. AND, "SO CAESAR MAY," HE CONTINUES. BUT IS HE LIKELY TO? CAESAR WAS ALREADY IN HIS MID-FIFTIES, AND, AS WE HAVE SAID, WAS ALREADY THE MOST POWERFUL MAN IN ROME, AND HAD BEEN FOR SOME TIME. BUT HE HAD DONE NOTHING BRUTUS CAN FIND TO COMPLAIN ABOUT. IS IT REASONABLE TO THINK THAT CAESAR IS ENOUGH LIKE "YOUNG AMBITION" THAT THE TITLE OF "KING" WILL CHANGE HIS WHOLE WAY OF BEHAVING? AND DOES BRUTUS REALLY THINK THAT HE WILL CHANGE?

WE CAN'T ANSWER EITHER QUESTION, OF COURSE. BUT THE FACT THAT WE HAVE TO RAISE THE QUESTIONS WHEN WE READ THIS SPEECH IS A GOOD INDICATION THAT SHAKESPEARE IS GIVING

Soliloquy reveals Brutus' character

US MORE HERE THAN JUST BRUTUS' REASONS FOR HIS DECISION. THAT IS, IF BRUTUS' REASONING IS QUESTIONABLE, WE HAVE TO ASK OURSELVES WHY SHAKESPEARE HAS HIS BRUTUS ENGAGE IN THIS KIND OF REASONING. CERTAINLY, SHAKESPEARE WAS CAPABLE OF MAKING AN AIRTIGHT CASE, IF HE HAD WANTED TO, THAT WOULD CONVINCE US THAT BRUTUS WAS RIGHT AND THAT CAESAR WAS EVIL AND REALLY DESERVED TO DIE FOR MISDEEDS HE HAD ALREADY COMMITTED.* INSTEAD HE SHOWS US BRUTUS SEARCHING FOR THEORETICAL REASONS TO JUSTIFY A KILLING THAT HE HAS ALREADY DECIDED MUST TAKE PLACE, AND UNCONVINCING THEORETICAL REASONS AT THAT. LET'S GO ON, THOUGH, AND LOOK AT THE REST OF THE SOLILOQUY, BEFORE WE TRY TO DECIDE WHY SHAKESPEARE HAS BRUTUS TALK LIKE THIS.

Impersonal references to the killing

"SO CAESAR MAY: THEN, LEST HE MAY, PREVENT." HOW PREVENT? BY ASSASSINATING HIM. NOTICE HOW IMPERSONAL THIS IS. NOT, "LEST HE MAY, I MUST KILL HIM," BUT, LEST HE MAY, PREVENT." THE SAME IS TRUE ELSEWHERE IN THE SPEECH: WHERE YOU WOULD EXPECT AN "I"--SINCE BRUTUS IS TALKING ABOUT WHAT HE MUST DO--WE FIND NO NOUN OR PRONOUN AT ALL: "FASHION IT THUS," "THINK HIM AS," "KILL HIM."

EVEN AT THE BEGINNING: "IT MUST BE BY HIS DEATH," NOT: "I MUST KILL CAESAR." WHY WOULD BRUTUS BE SPEAKING SO IMPERSONALLY?

(Student discussion of this may be called for.)

IF YOU SAY, AS SOME PEOPLE HAVE, THAT THIS WHOLE SPEECH SHOWS A MAN TRYING TO GIVE HIS CONSCIENCE GOOD REASONS FOR DOING SOMETHING THE MAN KNOWS IS WRONG BUT WANTS TO DO ANYWAY, THEN THE IMPERSONALITY OF THE SPEECH MAY BE AN INDICATION THAT BRUTUS STILL IS TRYING TO AVOID ADMITTING TO HIMSELF THAT HE HAS ACTUALLY DECIDED TO MURDER HIS BEST FRIEND. BRUTUS IS NOT TALKING TO HIMSELF ABOUT A DECISION TO STEAL A TEST PAPER. HE IS TALKING TO HIMSELF ABOUT TAKING A KNIFE AND COLDBLOODEDLY PUSHING IT INTO A MAN WHO IS [illegible] RULER OF HIS COUNTRY. NOTICE HOW EVEN THE LAST LINE IN THE SOLILOQUY CAREFULLY AVOIDS THE PHYSICAL REALITY OF THE ACT OF ASSASSINATION: "KILL HIM *IN THE SHELL*."

LET'S GO BACK, THOUGH, AND SEE HOW BRUTUS CONCLUDES HIS OWN ARGUMENT. BRUTUS USES LEGAL LANGUAGE HERE, AND THE FIRST CLAUSE MEANS SOMETHING LIKE, "SINCE I CANNOT MAKE A GOOD CASE ON THE BASIS OF CAESAR'S PAST ACTIONS."

"AND SINCE THE QUARREL WILL BEAR NO COLOR FOR THE THING HE IS, FASHION IT THUS: THAT WHAT HE IS, *AUGMENTED*, WOULD RUN TO THESE AND THESE EXTREMITIES." NOTICE THE VAGUENESS THERE: "THESE AND THESE."

THEN HE RETURNS TO THE IMAGE OF THE POISONOUS SNAKE. "AND THEREFORE THINK HIM AS A SERPENT'S EGG, WHICH HATCHED, WOULD AS HIS KIND GROW MISCHIEVOUS: AND KILL HIM IN THE SHELL."

NOTICE THAT BRUTUS IS NOT COMPARING CAESAR WITH THE SNAKE--BUT WITH THE SNAKE'S EGG. CAESAR HAS WITHIN HIM SOMETHING WHICH IS POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS--AN UNBORN SERPENT.

THE POISONOUS SERPENT IS THE EVIL OF AMBITION AND RUTHLESSNESS THAT MIGHT BE HATCHED--OR THAT MIGHT COME OUT OF ITS DEN INTO THE SUNLIGHT--IF CAESAR WERE CROWNED.

BRUTUS WANTS TO KILL THE SERPENT, NOT CAESAR. BUT THE SERPENT IS IN CAESAR, AND THEREFORE CAESAR MUST DIE IF THE SERPENT IS TO BE PREVENTED FROM DOING HARM.

ALL RIGHT, NOW, LET'S COME BACK TO THE QUESTION OF WHAT SORT OF MAN BRUTUS IS. WHAT SORT OF MAN WOULD NEED TO MAKE A SPEECH LIKE THIS TO HIMSELF? WE ARE GOING TO BE READING OTHER SCENES LATER IN WHICH BRUTUS IS INVOLVED, AND THE THINGS WE LEARN ABOUT HIM FROM THIS SPEECH WILL INFLUENCE HOW WE INTERPRET THE THINGS WE SEE BRUTUS SAY AND DO LATER IN THE PLAY.

Discussion

(Now allow the students to speculate about Brutus' character, as it is revealed in the speech.* Enough prompts have been given in the analysis above that a discussion should be at least somewhat informed.

Since the critics have been unable to agree about this soliloquy in more than three hundred years, there is no reason for expecting the students to come to any particular conclusion, just so what they say is relevant to the text. Neither should they be forced to accept the analysis given above. The purpose of the discussion is to get the students talking about the dramatic and characterizing functions of the soliloquy.

If a student has not spotted the irony, at the conclusion of the discussion you might look again at the line, "The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins remorse from power." Ask if it is not Brutus, who in planning to exercise his power by murdering his best friend, ignores his conscience, not to mention his duty to Caesar. In Brutus, power and pity are disjoined. It is Brutus, not Caesar, who is swayed more by his "affection" than his "reason.")

Summary

SO BRUTUS AGREES TO JOIN THE CONSPIRACY.* IN FACT, HE IMMEDIATELY PUTS HIMSELF IN CHARGE OF IT. CASSIUS PROPOSES THAT ANTONY, CAESAR'S YOUNG FRIEND, SHOULD BE KILLED, TOO. BUT BRUTUS OVERRULES HIM, SAYING THAT ANTONY IS POWERLESS WITHOUT CAESAR AND THAT THEY MUST APPEAR MERCIFUL. ANTONY HAS APPEARED BRIEFLY IN AN EARLIER SCENE. HE IS A CHAMPION ATHLETE, A PLAYBOY, AND A LADY'S MAN. CASSIUS FEARS HIS AFFECTION FOR CAESAR MAKES HIM A DANGEROUS ENEMY. BRUTUS DOES NOT THINK ANTONY CAN HARM THEM AND INSISTS ONLY CAESAR DIE. THE ASSASSINATION ITSELF WILL BE THE NEXT SCENE WE LOOK AT.

The situation before the play opens is that Julius Caesar has made himself the most powerful man in Rome. Brutus, who is younger than Caesar, is Caesar's trusted friend and the most noble and respected man in Rome. A number of Roman aristocrats, headed by Caius Cassius, have formed a conspiracy to assassinate Caesar. Some fear that Caesar's growing power will interfere with their own freedom and privileges. Others have specific grievances against Caesar, or are jealous of his success. The conspirators fear that if they kill Caesar the citizens of Rome will revolt and kill them in turn. But they know that if Brutus can be brought into the conspiracy, his prestige is so great that he can convince the people that the killing of Caesar was morally correct and patriotic. Since the conspiracy cannot succeed without Brutus, Cassius and the other conspirators decide to approach him. They know that Brutus' primary motivation is his love of Rome. So they want to convince him that Caesar is about to make himself a king and that Caesar has no right to exercise such power.

ACT I

i. The common people of Rome have left work to welcome Caesar back to Rome. Two tribunes argue with the citizens and try to force them to go home, because they fear that Caesar will become convinced he is popular enough to overthrow the Republic and make himself king.

ii. As Caesar is on his way to attend the games celebrating the Feast of Lupercal, a soothsayer (fortune teller) warns him to beware the Ides of March (March 15). Cassius begins to complain to Brutus of Caesar's growing power. Cassius knows Brutus well enough not to try to appeal to Brutus' greed or his resentment or his ambition. Instead, he first flatters Brutus, praising his virtue, his nobility, his courage: He tells him how much the people love and respect him. Then he shows Brutus, by way of stories about Caesar, that Caesar does not deserve to rule Rome because he actually is inferior in many ways both to Brutus and to Cassius. He reminds Brutus that it was his ancestor, another Brutus, who drove the kings from Rome hundreds of years before: And he argues that Caesar rules Rome alone only because the really noble people such as Brutus allow him to do so, through their inaction and their failure to lead the people in opposition to Caesar. Brutus realizes what Cassius is getting at, but he tells Cassius he has to have time to think over such an important decision. Casca, returning from the games describes how Antony, with the crowd's approval, has three times offered Caesar a crown, which Caesar has refused each time. (The crown would have been symbolic; only the Senate could make Caesar king.) Brutus tells Cassius he will meet him the next day to continue their discussion. Cassius is convinced Brutus will join a conspiracy against Caesar.

iii. Cassius enlists Casca in the conspiracy. They send Cinna to plant forged messages from "citizens," begging Brutus to save Rome from Caesar. It is the 14th of March. Cassius now feels Brutus has been won over and makes plans with the conspirators to go to Brutus' house at dawn the following morning.

ACT II

i. Brutus cannot sleep; in the middle of the night he argues with himself about whether Caesar threatens the freedom of Rome. Cassius and the conspirators visit him and Brutus agrees, despite his wife's fears, to join them in attempting to assassinate Caesar.

ii. Caesar's wife, Calpurnia, persuades Caesar not to go to the Senate: she has had frightening dreams and there have been bad omens. But Decius Brutus, a conspirator, convinces Caesar people will say Caesar is afraid if he stays home. Brutus and the other conspirators arrive to accompany Caesar to the Capitol.

iii. Artemidorus, a teacher, has discovered the conspiracy and written a letter warning Caesar. He plans to hand it to Caesar as he passes in the street.

iv. Portia, Brutus' wife, nervously sends to find how the plot has succeeded. The soothsayer, on his way to warn Caesar again, speaks to her in passing.

ACT III

i. Caesar takes Artemidorus' letter but does not read it. Soon after he opens the session of the Senate, the conspirators attack Caesar and stab him to death. Antony pretends sympathy with the conspirators and receives their permission to speak at Caesar's funeral. When alone, Antony vows to avenge Caesar. A servant of Octavius Caesar arrives and informs Antony that Octavius (Caesar's nephew) is returning to Rome.

ii. Brutus speaks to the Roman crowd, explains Caesar was an enemy of their liberty, and leaves with the crowd cheering him. Antony, when his turn comes to speak, brilliantly turns the crowd against the conspirators and sends them roaring after Brutus and Cassius, who have to flee from the city. Octavius arrives in Rome.

iii. The mob riots against the conspirators, rages madly through Rome, burning and looting. The mob baits and kills an innocent poet who happens to have the same name as one of the conspirators.

ACT IV

i. Antony, Octavius, and a general named Lepidus take over Rome and plan the elimination of everyone who might be an enemy. They make plans to raise an army to pursue Brutus and Cassius.

ii. Cassius and Brutus, each now in command of an army, meet in Brutus' camp in Asia Minor, where Antony has pursued them.

iii. Brutus and Cassius have a violent quarrel. Then Cassius discovers Brutus has just learned of Portia's suicide. They make their peace, and Brutus insists their armies should march to meet Antony and Octavius at Philippi. Later, Brutus is visited by Caesar's ghost, which warns Brutus they will meet again at Philippi.

ACT V

i. The armies meet. Brutus and Cassius parley with Antony and Octavius. They exchange insults and then give the signal for battle.

ii, iii. The armies clash. Cassius mistakenly is led to believe that his army is defeated. He orders his slave to kill him, so that he will not be captured. The slave does so, then flees. Cassius' lieutenant, Titinius, returns with news of victory, finds Cassius dead. He places the wreath of victory on Cassius' brow and kills himself in grief.

iv. Brutus' army, unlike Cassius', is being beaten. An officer of the army is captured by Antony and predicts Brutus will never be taken alive.

v. Rather than be captured, Brutus kills himself. Antony and Octavius are victorious. They decree an honorable burial for Brutus and the play ends.

CAESAR'S ASSASSINATION

Background

JULIUS CAESAR, THE TITLE CHARACTER IN THE PLAY, IS ASSASSINATED BEFORE THE PLAY IS HALF OVER, IN THE FIRST SCENE OF THE THIRD ACT. THE ASSASSINATION IS THE CENTRAL EVENT IN THE PLAY. EVERYTHING BEFORE HAS BEEN LEADING UP TO THE KILLING. EVERYTHING AFTERWARDS IS A CONSEQUENCE OF IT.

HISTORICALLY, THE ASSASSINATION IS ONE OF THOSE GREAT EVENTS IN WHICH THE COURSE OF AN ENTIRE CIVILIZATION IS AFFECTED BY WHAT HAPPENS TO ONE MAN. CAESAR'S DEATH WAS A TURNING POINT IN WORLD HISTORY: ONE OF THOSE HIGHLY DRAMATIC EVENTS THAT WRITERS OF ALL SORTS KEEP FINDING NEW MEANINGS IN.

SINCE THE ASSASSINATION IS SO IMPORTANT, WE SHOULD PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO HOW SHAKESPEARE HANDLES IT, AND TO HOW THE IMPORTANCE OF THE EVENT MIGHT BE CONVEYED TO AN AUDIENCE.

Summary of the action

EARLIER IN THE PLAY, CAESAR HAD BEEN WARNED BY A SOOTHSAYER OR FORTUNETELLER TO "BEWARE THE IDES OF MARCH"-- THE FIFTEENTH OF MARCH. ACT THREE OPENS ON THE IDES OF MARCH

AND THE SOOTHSAYER IS AGAIN PRESENT. CAESAR, ACCOMPANIED BY IMPORTANT CITIZENS, INCLUDING THE CONSPIRATORS, IS ON HIS WAY TO THE ROMAN SENATE, WHERE HE EXPECTS TO BE OFFERED THE CROWN AS KING OF ROME. CAESAR SEES THE SOOTHSAYER AND SAYS, "THE IDES OF MARCH ARE COME." "AYE, CAESAR," THE SOOTHSAYER REPLIES, "BUT NOT GONE."

A TEACHER NAMED ARTEMIDORUS, WHO SOMEHOW HAS LEARNED OF THE CONSPIRACY TO ASSASSINATE CAESAR, PUSHES HIS WAY THROUGH THE CROWD TO CAESAR AND HANDS HIM A DOCUMENT CONTAINING THE NAMES OF THE CONSPIRATORS.

CAESAR TAKES THE PAPER BUT DOES NOT READ IT. CAESAR AND THE OFFICIALS ENTER THE SENATE CHAMBER.* A SENATOR NAMED POPILIUS GOES TO CAESAR AND WHISPERS SOMETHING TO HIM. CASSIUS MOMENTARILY PANICS, AFRAID THAT POPILIUS IS WARNING CAESAR OF THE PLOT. BUT CAESAR SMILES AT WHATEVER POPILIUS HAS SAID TO HIM.

CAESAR SEATS HIMSELF AND CALLS THE SENATE TO ORDER. TREBONIUS, ONE OF THE CONSPIRATORS, FINDS AN EXCUSE TO TALK PRIVATELY TO MARK ANTONY AND TAKES HIM AWAY FROM CAESAR'S SIDE. THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS IS THE HEARING OF APPEALS AND PETITIONS. METELLUS CIMBER, A CONSPIRATOR, BOWS BEFORE CAESAR AND BEGS THAT HIS BROTHER BE ALLOWED TO RETURN FROM EXILE. WHEN CAESAR REFUSES, METELLUS ASKS IF THERE ARE NOT WORTHIER VOICES WHO WILL HELP HIM PLEAD HIS

CASE. THIS GIVES THE OTHER CONSPIRATORS, INCLUDING CASSIUS AND BRUTUS, AN EXCUSE TO APPROACH CAESAR. THEY SURROUND HIM, CUTTING HIM OFF FROM OTHER SENATORS WHO MIGHT HELP HIM. THEN, AS CAESAR IS REPRIMANDING THE CONSPIRATORS FOR ATTEMPTING TO CHANGE HIS MIND BY BEGGING, CASCA STABS CAESAR IN THE BACK AND THE OTHER CONSPIRATORS DRAW THEIR KNIVES AND ATTACK HIM.

LOOK AT YOUR BOOKS NOW. THE ACTIONS I HAVE SUMMARIZED TAKE ABOUT SEVENTY-FIVE LINES OF THE SCENE. NOW LET US SEE HOW SHAKESPEARE HANDLES THE KILLING ITSELF. LINE SEVENTY-SIX.

The dialogue

CASCA: SPEAK, HANDS, FOR ME!

CAESAR: ET TU, BRUTE!--THEN FALL, CAESAR!

THAT IS ALL THE DIALOGUE THERE IS, EVEN THOUGH THIS ACTION IS THE FOCAL POINT OF THE WHOLE PLAY. TWO LINES.

Stage directions
directions

(The stage directions accompanying the dialogue will differ greatly from edition to edition. At this point read, or have a student read, the directions in the edition you are using. If the students are using paperback copies of the play, there may be several editions in use and therefore several sets of directions.)

DO THE DIRECTIONS GIVE YOU A CLEAR IDEA OF WHAT THE ACTORS PLAYING THE CONSPIRATORS WOULD BE DOING--WHAT PART EACH CONSPIRATOR WOULD BE TAKING IN THE ACTION? HOW CAESAR WOULD REACT WHEN HE WAS ATTACKED?

(Allow the students to begin discussing this, but move on to the next point quickly, after initial suggestions have been made.)

ACTUALLY, THE STAGE DIRECTIONS WE HAVE JUST READ WERE NOT WRITTEN BY SHAKESPEARE. THEY WERE ADDED BY EDITORS TO HELP READERS UNDERSTAND WHAT WAS HAPPENING. IN THE FIRST EDITION OF THE PLAY THAT WE HAVE THERE WERE ONLY THESE DIRECTIONS. AFTER CASCA SAYS, "SPEAK, HANDS, FOR ME!" THERE IS THE DIRECTION, "THEY STAB CAESAR." AFTER CAESAR SAYS, "ET TO, BRUTE?--THEN FALL, CAESAR!" THERE IS THE SIMPLE DIRECTION, "DIES." AND THAT IS ALL. THEY STAB CAESAR. CAESAR DIES.

Shakespeare's stage directions

THE QUESTION OF COURSE IS, HOW WOULD THE ACTORS DOING THIS SCENE KNOW WHAT THEY SHOULD DO. OR, HOW WOULD THE READER KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON WHEN HE READ THESE LINES.

LET ME ASK YOU THE QUESTION ANOTHER WAY. HOW DID THE EDITOR WHO WROTE THE STAGE DIRECTIONS IN YOUR COPY OF THE PLAY DECIDE ON WHAT TO WRITE?

Necessary actions

(Let the students try to answer the question. If their remarks do not seem to be getting to the point, ask the following questions, in whatever order seems called for.)

WHAT KIND OF MAN WAS CAESAR? WHAT SORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS WAS HE FAMOUS FOR?

(He was a soldier. He was proud, forceful, determined, etc.)

WOULD A MAN LIKE CAESAR BE LIKELY TO JUST STAND THERE WHILE PEOPLE TRIED TO STAB HIM?

(No, he would try to defend himself. And, although he is no longer a young man--he is in his fifties--he is well trained in the military arts and capable of defending himself.)

WHAT SORT OF MENTAL STATE ARE THE CONSPIRATORS PROBABLY IN AS THEY ATTACK CAESAR?

(Excited, possibly frightened; Cassius has nearly panicked.)

IF PEOPLE ARE HIGHLY EXCITED, DO THEY OPERATE EFFICIENTLY?

(Probably they are not highly efficient attackers, probably they get in one another's way.)

HOW ABOUT CAESAR'S LINE, "ET TU, BRUTE! THEN FALL, CAESAR!" WOULD THIS LINE MAKE SENSE IF CAESAR WERE JUST PASSIVELY ENDURING THE ATTACK?

(No. The "then fall" suggests a change, it signals an end to Caesar's resistance. Seeing Brutus, who he would have expected to come to his aid, among the attackers, Caesar's spirit is broken and he gives up. But the giving up would have no meaning unless Caesar had been holding his own against the conspirator's attack.)

Plutarch

NOW, LET US GO AT THE PROBLEM ANOTHER WAY. AS YOU MAY KNOW, SHAKESPEARE WAS A MEMBER OF THE ACTING COMPANY THAT ORIGINALLY PUT ON HIS PLAYS.* IF HE HAD DEFINITE IDEAS ABOUT HOW CAESAR AND THE DIFFERENT CONSPIRATORS WOULD ACT DURING THE ASSASSINATION, HE WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TELL HIS IDEAS DIRECTLY TO THE ACTORS PLAYING THE PARTS: HE WOULD NOT HAVE HAD TO WRITE DOWN ELABORATE DIRECTIONS.

AND WE KNOW THAT SHAKESPEARE DID HAVE A BLOW BY BLOW ACCOUNT OF THE ASSASSINATION. SHAKESPEARE TOOK THE STORY OF CAESAR FROM A TRANSLATION OF A BOOK BY PLUTARCH CALLED THE LIVES OF THE NOBLE GRECIANS AND ROMANS.

(Put the name and title on the blackboard.)

SHAKESPEARE FOLLOWED PLUTARCH CLOSELY, AT TIMES TAKING WHOLE SPEECHES RIGHT OUT OF THE TRANSLATION HE WAS USING AND PUTTING THEM IN HIS PLAY. AND PLUTARCH GAVE A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF CAESAR'S DEATH. PLUTARCH'S ACCOUNT DID NOT INVOLVE MUCH DIALOGUE--IT WAS A NARRATIVE OF A SERIES OF ACTIONS.

WE CAN, AS WE HAVE SEEN, FIGURE OUT SOME OF THE ACTIONS BY REMINDING OURSELVES OF THE SITUATION AND THE TYPES OF CHARACTERS INVOLVED IN IT. BUT BY LOOKING BACK AT THE SOURCE SHAKESPEARE HIMSELF USED, WE MAY BE ABLE TO GET AN IDEA OF HOW SHAKESPEARE MIGHT HAVE VISUALIZED THE SCENE BEING DONE IN HIS THEATRE.

(The excerpt from Plutarch that follows may be read to the students. Or copies of it may be made and given to the students. Or a student may have been assigned earlier to locate Plutarch's account of the assassination, and he may at this time be asked to read the account and to supplement it with any other pertinent information from Plutarch he may have found.) (3)

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THE ASSASSINATION OF CAESAR,

From Plutarch's Lives ("Caesar") The Dryden translation

When Caesar entered, the senate stood up to show their respect to him, and of Brutus' confederates, some came about his chair and stood behind it, others met him, pretending to add their petitions to those of Tillius Cimber, in behalf of his brother who was in exile; and they followed him with their joint applications till he came to his seat. When he was sat down, he refused to comply with their requests, and upon their urging him further began to reproach them severely for their importunities, when Tillius, laying hold of his robe with both his hands, pulled it down from his neck, which was the signal for the assault.

Casca gave him the first cut in the neck, which was not mortal nor dangerous, and coming from one who at the beginning of such a bold action was probably much disturbed; Caesar immediately turned about, and laid his hand upon the dagger and kept hold of it. And both of them at the same time cried out, he that received the blow, in Latin, "Vile Casca, what does this mean?" and he that gave it, in Greek, to his brother, "Brother, help!"

Upon this first onset, those who were not privy to the design were astonished, and their horror and amazement at what they saw were so great that they durst not flee, nor assist Caesar, nor so much as speak a word. But those who came prepared for the business enclosed him on every side, with their naked daggers in their hands. Which way soever he turned he met with blows, and saw their swords levelled at his face and eyes, and was encompassed, like a wild beast in the toils, on every side.

For it had been agreed they should each of them make a thrust at him, and flesh themselves with his blood; for which reason Brutus also gave him one stab. Some say that he fought and resisted all the rest, shifting his body to avoid the blows, and calling out for help, but that when he saw Brutus' sword drawn, he covered his face with his robe and submitted, letting himself fall, whether it were by chance, or that he was pushed in that direction by his murderers, at the foot of the pedestal on which Pompey's statue stood, and which he thus wetted with his blood. So that Pompey himself seemed to have presided, as it were, over the revenge done upon his adversary, who lay here at his feet, and breathed out his soul through his multitude of wounds, for they say he received three-and-twenty. And the conspirators themselves were many of them wounded by each other, whilst they all levelled their blows at the same person.*

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ONE THING YOU CAN SEE IS THAT ALTHOUGH THE TWO LINES OF DIALOGUE CAN BE READ IN A FEW SECONDS, THE ASSASSINATION ON STAGE COULD TAKE A GOOD DEAL LONGER TO ACT OUT, AND IT COULD BE A VERY EXCITING SPECTACLE. LET US TAKE PLUTARCH'S ACCOUNT OF THE ASSASSINATION AS AN ELABORATE SET OF STAGE DIRECTIONS, AND LET US ACT OUT THE ASSASSINATION OF JULIUS CAESAR.

BESIDES CAESAR AND THE CONSPIRATORS, WHO ARE THE CENTER OF ATTENTION, REMEMBER THAT THE ROMAN SENATORS ARE ALSO PRESENT. THEY WOULD, OF COURSE REACT TO WHAT WAS HAPPENING. PLUTARCH SAYS THEY WERE HORRIFIED AND AMAZED. AND THEIR REACTIONS, AS WELL AS THE REACTIONS OF CAESAR AND THE CONSPIRATORS WHO ARE ACTUALLY FIGHTING, WOULD BE VERBAL AS WELL AS PHYSICAL; ALTHOUGH PLUTARCH SAYS THEY COULD NOT SPEAK A WORD, THERE WOULD BE GASPS AND GRUNTS.

The assassinatio performed

(Select students to play the parts of Caesar and seven conspirators. The scene will begin with the major actors already in place: Caesar seated, the conspirators surrounding him. Casca will strike first, then the others together, except Brutus. Brutus should hang back a little, since his attack, when it comes, signals the end of Caesar's resistance.

If the classroom situation allows, the other students--the senators--may be ranged around the major actors. But they may also do their part from their seats. Some students may be asked to rise when the attack starts, or to start to move toward or away from the action. Tell them that they should try to act as they would imagine themselves acting if they happened to be witnesses to such a scene in real life.

The conspirators may be provided with sticks or rulers that can serve as daggers.

If the actor cast as Caesar is one of the larger boys in the class, his successful resistance--for a while--may seem more realistic.

Play through the scene several times. The major objective of this exercise is simply to create excitement in response to a violent physical conflict, to get the students to have a genuine emotional response to something in a Shakespearean play.

Encourage the students to elaborate the fight--even to choreograph it. An effective way to control the development of the action in its early stages is to have both the assassination and the reactions to it done in slow motion. If the students wish to play Caesar as Superman, knocking down his enemies right and left, let them.

After each running through of the scene, discuss what was done and elicit suggestions of additional business.)

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ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE

If additional classrooms or acting areas are available for student groups to rehearse in, an alternative procedure might be to have as many as three separate groups prepare this same scene. In this case appoint a student director for each group. Have them rehearse in separate rooms and then present their renditions before the entire class. The purpose of this alternative procedure is not to encourage competition, but rather to directly involve more students in the physical experience. It also reinforces a point that was stressed in the first unit: interpretations of scenes and characters vary with each performance. The discussion following the three presentations, then, should focus on what was good in each interpretation and not on which interpretation was best.

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THE ASSASSINATION OF CAESAR,

From Plutarch's Lives ("Caesar") The Dryden translation

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THE CONFRONTATION: 1

(Hand out copies of the prose paraphrase* of the confrontation scene. Read with the students the summary of events between the act of assassination and the opening of the scene.

(4)

Remind the students that they should be concerned at this point with the plot and characters in the scene; and that later they will come back to the original version. Also remind them that your questions about the dialogue would apply as well to Shakespeare's play as to this paraphrase of it. But that the questions about business refer only to one imaginary production of the play.

Act prose paraphrase of scene

The stage directions--except for entrances and exits--are either explicit notations of necessary actions implied in the dialogue or else one reader's idea of interpretive actions that would help an audience understand the conflicts in the scene. It might be mentioned to the students that, traditionally, editors of Shakespeare have taken the liberty of adding directions which specify their own understanding of particular passages.

Choose actors for the various parts, have them walk through the scene once, reading from the script and following the directions for movement and business. It is strongly suggested that an overcoat or a pillow serve for Caesar's corpse. There is nothing more unsettling than a dead body that moves and makes wisecracks. This first time, it might help if a student is appointed to read the stage directions aloud.

In a very small or crowded classroom, one can resort to the expedient of drawing two or three figures on the blackboard to represent conspirators. These cartoons will serve the purpose of reminding students of the number of armed men surrounding Antony, but will help to prevent cluttering and confusion.

Discuss

Once the actors have become familiar with the lines and written stage directions, have them begin the scene again.* This time interrupt the action frequently to question both the characters who are speaking and those who are looking on. Probably the most efficient, and the most helpful, way to proceed would be to take an early action in the scene--say the servant's entrance--and to go over and over this action until all the actors are behaving in character and their movements and postures make sense. Then repeat the process for the servant's exit: question the actors, call for suggestions, and prescribe movements. As the reading progresses, the actors should be able to proceed with fewer and fewer interruptions.

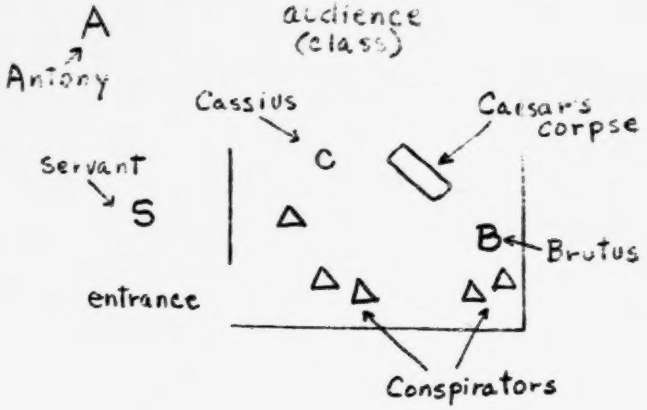
Act again

After the scene has been discussed, play through it without stopping. It might be good to arrange things so that the discussion of the play concludes with the period, so that the students will have time to think about and possibly to rehearse their parts prior to "performance."

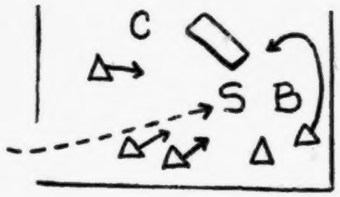
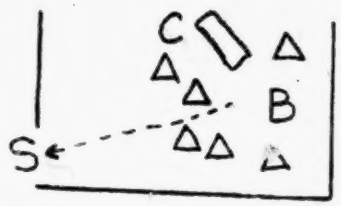
If you think it profitable, the scene may be acted through yet another time. But a smooth or effective performance is not to be expected, if for no other reason than that the leading actors will still be reading from scripts. However, the purpose of these exercises is to let students work with a scene and see it come to life, not to train actors or to prepare for a public performance. The plan is, that when the students later return to this scene and work with it in Shakespearean English, they will have both a memory of the physical movements in this scene and an understanding of the characters which will facilitate their understanding of the original.

PROSE PARAPHRASE OF THE CONFRONTATION SCENE

(Teacher's Copy)



Caesar's murdered body lies on the Senate floor. The conspirators have ritualistically washed their hands in Caesar's blood. Brutus tells the conspirators that they will walk through Rome, "waving our red weapons o'er our heads," crying, "Peace, freedom, and liberty." As they are about to leave, Antony's servant enters.

PARAPHRASE	QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS	ADDITIONAL STAGE DIRECTIONS	POSSIBLE BLOCKING
BRUTUS. Wait. Antony has sent his servant to speak to us.		*The conspirators turn toward the servant and watch him as he crosses to Brutus.*	
SERVANT (kneeling before Brutus). My master, Antony, told me to bow down before you and say these things: "I loved and honored and feared Caesar, and I love and honor Brutus. I want to know why Caesar was killed. But I fear for my own life. If Brutus promises me I will not be harmed, I will come here, so that Brutus can explain to me why he killed Caesar. If Brutus shows me he had good reasons, I will become his faithful follower." (Pause) Antony told me to say these things.		*Some of the conspirators move in behind the servant. He is aware of them and is frightened.*	
BRUTUS (reassuringly). I have always known your master was wise and brave. (Helps the servant rise) Tell him to come here if he wishes to hear my explanation. I give my word he will not be harmed.	*Brutus is gracious and gentle with the servant.*		
SERVANT. I'll bring him at once. (He backs off a few steps, then turns and hurries out)			
(The conspirators start to move toward Brutus, each ready to give his opinion)			

BRUTUS (confidently). Antony will be our ally.

CASSIUS. That would certainly be nice. But I don't trust Antony. He wants us dead.

(Antony enters)

BRUTUS. Here is Antony. (Brutus offers his hand as Antony approaches. Antony ignores him and walks to Caesar's body, over which he stands silently. Brutus follows him. The other conspirators move so as to block Antony from the exits.)

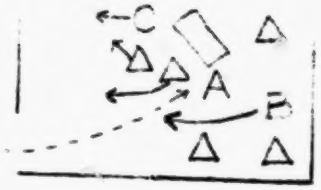
BRUTUS. Welcome, Mark Antony.

ANTONY (to the corpse). O mighty Caesar, has all your glory come to this? (Pause) Farewell. (He finally looks at Brutus, then around at the other conspirators) Gentlemen, I don't know what you plan to do now. Who else is going to die? (He half-turns and gestures toward Caesar's corpse during the next speech) If I must die, there is no better time than right now. And there is no better place to die than here by Caesar, struck down by you, the most powerful men on earth.

BRUTUS. Antony! Don't ask us to kill you. (He moves as if to embrace Antony, realizes he is still holding his dagger. He conceals his confusion and puts the dagger away as he speaks) We are not as cruel as we look at the moment. We did not kill Caesar because we are cruel. We killed him because our hearts were breaking with pity for the poor, suffering Roman people. We intend you no harm. (Cassius mutters something;

The conspirators stop.

Sarcastically. Cassius is not happy that Brutus has taken charge.

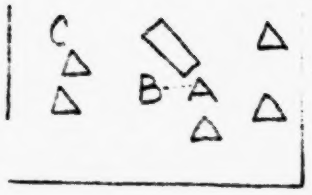


All notice and react to his entrance.

Brutus ignores Antony's rudeness, but the other conspirators react angrily, move to be ready for anything Antony does.

Is this good strategy? What if Antony had just come on and ignored Caesar and immediately pledged his allegiance to Brutus?

Antony shies back, ready to defend himself.



How convincing will Brutus' explanation be to the audience after his soliloquy and after the assassination?

all but Brutus and Antony glance at him. The conspirators put away their daggers as Brutus is speaking) We welcome you with affection and with good intentions.

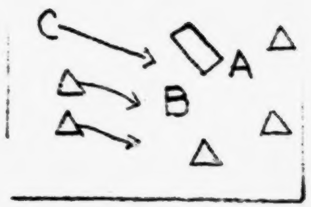
CASSIUS (moving up beside Brutus and trying to smile). Antony, you will have as much say as anyone, when it comes time to divide up the profits.

(The noise of voices and shouting from the street; a few of the braver citizens may be seen peering in the doors of the Senate)

BRUTUS. Antony, your explanations will have to wait until we have calmed the mob. Then I will explain why I had to kill Caesar although I loved him.

ANTONY. I am sure you did the right thing. Here, each of you, give me your bloody hands and I will shake them. (Antony moves from one to the other, shaking the hand of each conspirator as he speaks the name) Marcus Brutus, Caius Cassius, Decius Brutus, Metellus, Cinna, Casca, and--last but not least--Trebonius. So. Gentlemen, what can I say? You must think me either a coward or a liar. I loved great Caesar, and it would grieve his spirit to see me shaking hands with his enemies. (Turns to the body) Pardon me, Caesar. But for all your greatness, you lie here like a slain deer, the hunters around you, stained with your blood.

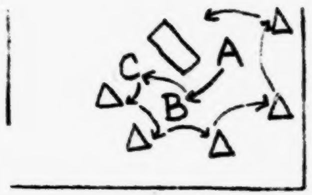
CASSIUS. Mark Antony--be careful.



What does this speech tell us about (1) Cassius? (2) Cassius' opinion of Antony? (3) Cassius' opinion of people in general?

Get students to ad lib the "voices and shouting."

The conspirators nearest the door react nervously to the uproar. One of them touches Brutus to call his attention to what is outside. Brutus calmly takes notice, then turns to Antony.



What reaction do the conspirators have to this ritual?

Shock, self-consciousness. One conspirator may stare at his hand after Antony has shaken it.

A threatening gesture with his hand, a step forward.

ANTONY (as if surprised). I'm sorry, Cassius. But even Caesar's enemies praise him; why is it wrong for me, who loved him, to praise him?

CASSIUS. Praise him, then. All that I'm interested in are your intentions. Are you with us or against us?

What is Brutus doing during this exchange?

ANTONY. With you, of course. Didn't I shake your hands? Caesar's corpse there just distracted me for a minute. I will be your friend. I will love you all. If you will explain why Caesar was so dangerous he had to die.

Note the qualification: "I will be your friend IF...."

BRUTUS (as if lecturing). If there were not good reasons, this would be a savage murder. But our reasons are so good that you would agree with them even if you were Caesar's son.

Remember Brutus' soliloquy. Are Brutus' reasons really such good ones? Are they likely to convince Antony?

ANTONY. Those reasons are all I want. But I want to ask one more favor: may I have your permission to take Caesar's body to the market-place and speak at his funeral services?

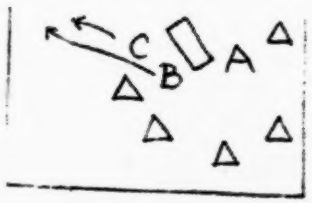
This is what Antony really wants.

BRUTUS (graciously). You may, Mark Antony.

Brutus is not an obstacle.

CASSIUS. Brutus, a word with you. (They move away. Cassius speaks quietly, but angrily) Brutus, you don't know what you're doing! Don't let Antony speak at the funeral. He's too clever! There's no telling how the people will react to what he says!

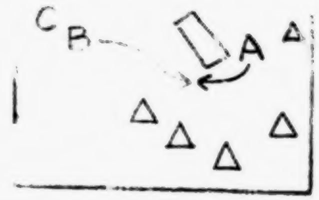
Cassius is an obstacle--both to Antony and to Brutus, who wants to behave nobly.



Antony does not move or change expression. The conspirators shuffle a bit, some watching Brutus and Cassius, some Antony.

BRUTUS (offended). If you don't mind.... (To everyone, firmly and slowly) I will speak first and explain why Caesar had to die. Then I will explain that Antony speaks with our permission. And I will explain that we want Caesar buried with all the honors he deserves. (To Cassius, friendly again) It will do us more good than harm.

Brutus removes the obstacle to Antony's desire by overriding Cassius.



CASSIUS (beaten down but not convinced). I still don't like it. I don't know what will happen.

He half turns his back on Brutus.

BRUTUS (ignoring Cassius). Mark Antony, take Caesar's body. (Antony snaps to attention, all subordination and grateful humility) In your funeral speech, you may praise Caesar. But you may not criticize us or what we have done. And you will make it clear that you speak with our permission. Otherwise, you may not take part in the funeral at all. Is that clear? After I have given my speech, then it will be your turn.

Brutus crosses his arms.

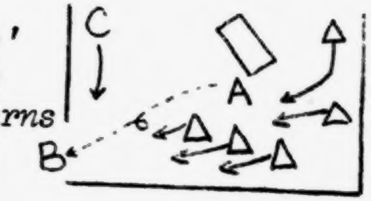
Brutus is confident that once he has spoken, nothing Antony can say will make any difference.

ANTONY. Agreed. That is all I want.

Still humble, grateful.

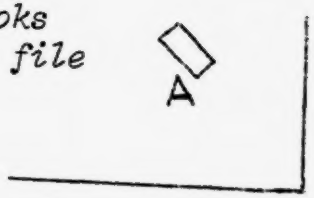
BRUTUS. Prepare the body then, and follow us.

He offers to take Brutus' hand, but Brutus keeps his arms crossed, returns Antony's earlier snub.



(All leave, except Antony)

Brutus begins to leave, the conspirators hesitate, not sure whether to let Antony go. Brutus stops and looks back at them. Then they file out after Brutus.



THE CONFRONTATION

Caesar's murdered body lies on the Senate floor. The conspirators have ritualistically washed their hands in Caesar's blood. Brutus tells the conspirators that they will walk through Rome, "waving our red weapons o'er our heads, "Crying, "Peace, freedom, and liberty." As they are about to leave, Antony's servant enters.

BRUTUS. Wait. Antony has sent his servant to speak to us.

SERVANT (*kneeling before Brutus*). My master, Antony, told me to bow down before you and say these things: "I loved and honored and feared Caesar, and I love and honor Brutus. I want to know why Caesar was killed. But I fear for my own life. If Brutus promises me I will not be harmed, I will come here, so that Brutus can explain to me why he killed Caesar. If Brutus shows me he had good reasons, I will become his faithful follower." (*Pause*) Antony told me to say these things.

BRUTUS. I have always known your master was wise and brave. (*Helps the servant rise*) Tell him to come here if he wishes to hear my explanation. I give my word he will not be harmed.

SERVANT. I'll bring him at once. (*He backs off a few steps, then turns and hurries out*)

(*The conspirators start to move toward Brutus, each ready to give his opinion*)

BRUTUS (*confidently*). Antony will be our ally.

CASSIUS. That would certainly be nice. But I still don't trust Antony. He wants us dead.

(*Antony enters*)

BRUTUS. Here is Antony. (*Brutus offers his hand as Antony approaches. Antony ignores him and walks to Caesar's body, over which he stands silently. Brutus follows him. Other conspirators move so as to block Antony from the exits.*)

BRUTUS. Welcome, Mark Antony.

ANTONY (*to the corpse*). O mighty Caesar has all your glory come to this? (*Pause*) Farewell. (*He finally looks at Brutus, then around at the other conspirators*) Gentlemen, I don't know what you plan to do now. Who else is going to die? (*He half-turns and gestures toward Caesar's corpse during the next speech*) If I must die, there is no better time than right now. And there is no better place to die than here by Caesar, struck down by you, the most powerful men on earth.

BRUTUS. Antony! Don't ask us to kill you. (*He moves as if to embrace Antony, realizes he is still holding his dagger. He conceals his confusion and puts the dagger away as he speaks*) We are not as cruel as we look at the moment. We did not kill Caesar because we are cruel. We killed him because our hearts were breaking with pity for the poor, suffering Roman people. We intend you no harm. (*Cassius mutters something; all but Brutus and Antony glance at him. The conspirators put away their daggers as Brutus is speaking*) We welcome you with affection and with good intentions.

CASSIUS (*moving up beside Brutus and trying to smile*). Antony, you will have as much say as anyone, when it comes time to divide up the profits.

(*The noise of voices and shouting from the street; a few of the braver citizens may be seen peering in the doors of the Senate*)

BRUTUS. Antony, your explanations will have to wait until we have calmed the mob. Then I will explain why I had to kill Caesar although I loved him.

ANTONY. I am sure you did the right thing. Here, each of you, give me your bloody hands and I will shake them. (*Antony moves from one to the other, shaking the hand of each conspirator as he speaks the name*) Marcus Brutus, Caius Cassius, Decius Brutus, Metellus, Cinna, Casca, and--last but not least--Trebonius. So. Gentlemen, what can I say? You must think me either a coward or a liar. I loved great Caesar, and it would grieve his spirit to see me shaking hands with his enemies. (*Turns to the body*) Pardon me, Caesar. But for all your greatness, you lie here like a slain deer, the hunters around you, stained with your blood.

CASSIUS. Mark Antony--be careful.

ANTONY (*as if surprised*). I'm sorry, Cassius. But even Caesar's enemies praise him; why is it wrong for me, who loved him, to praise him?

CASSIUS. Praise him, then. All that I'm interested in are your intentions. Are you with us or against us?

ANTONY. With you, of course. Didn't I shake your hands? Caesar's corpse there just distracted me for a minute. I will be your friend. I will love you all. If you will explain why Caesar was so dangerous he had to die.

BRUTUS (*as if lecturing*). If there were not good reasons, this would be a savage murder. But our reasons are so good that you would agree with them even if you were Caesar's son.

ANTONY. Those reasons are all I want. But I want to ask one more favor: may I have your permission to take Caesar's body to the market-place and speak at his funeral services?

BRUTUS (*graciously*). You may, Mark Antony.

CASSIUS. Brutus, a word with you. (*They move away. Cassius speaks quietly, but angrily*). Brutus, you don't know what you're doing! Don't let Antony speak at the funeral. He's too clever! There's no telling how the people will react to what he says!

BRUTUS (*offended*). If you don't mind ....(*To everyone, firmly and slowly*) I will speak first and explain why Caesar had to die. Then I will explain that Antony speaks with our permission. And I will explain that we want Caesar buried with all the honors he deserves. (*To Cassius, friendly again*). It will do us more good than harm.

CASSIUS (*beaten down but not convinced*). I still don't like it. I don't know what will happen.

BRUTUS (*ignoring Cassius*) Mark Antony, take Caesar's body. (*Antony snaps to attention, all subordination and grateful humility*). In your funeral speech, you may praise Caesar. But you may not criticize us or what we have done. And you will make it clear that you speak with our permission. Otherwise, you may not take part in the funeral at all. Is that clear? After I have given my speech, then it will be your turn.

ANTONY. Agreed. That is all I want.

BRUTUS. Prepare the body then, and follow us.

(*all leave, except Antony*)

'CRY HAVOC!'

WE ARE GOING TO COME BACK LATER TO THIS SCENE WE ACTED YESTERDAY AND TRY TO DO IT IN SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLISH. BUT FIRST, IT MAY HELP US TO DO A BETTER JOB WITH THE SCENE IF WE KNOW A LITTLE MORE ABOUT THE CHARACTERS IN IT. THE SCENE WE HAVE BEEN PLAYING ENDED WITH THE CONSPIRATORS LEAVING THE STAGE. ANTONY IS LEFT ALONE WITH THE BODY OF CAESAR. AND HE OBTAINED THE PERMISSION OF BRUTUS TO MAKE A PUBLIC SPEECH AT CAESAR'S FUNERAL. KEEP THE PLACE NOW, BUT CLOSE YOUR BOOKS. I WANT YOU TO LISTEN TO WHAT SHAKESPEARE HAS ANTONY SAY IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CONSPIRATORS LEAVE. IMAGINE ANTONY KNEELING, WITH HIS HEAD BOWED, OVER CAESAR'S BODY AS THE SPEECH BEGINS.

The "Cry Havoc!" speech

(You may read the speech yourself to the students, or you may play the speech from a recording of the play. The speech begins at III, i, 254-75, "O, pardon me" and runs to "carrion men, groaning for burial." If you read well, and have time to rehearse, a "live" rendition is much to be preferred to even the best recording. If you decide, however, on the recording, mark the groove at which the speech opens with a piece of tape before class or make a tape recording of the speech.

The first time you read or play the speech, ask the students just to listen to it. The second time, ask them to follow in their own texts as it is read.)

NOW YOU HAVE HEARD ANTONY'S SPEECH TWICE. I WANT YOU TO ANSWER SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT IT FOR ME, BECAUSE I THINK YOU WILL FIND THAT YOU UNDERSTOOD MORE OF IT THAN YOU THINK YOU DID. TAKE A PIECE OF PAPER AND PUT YOUR NAME ON IT. I WANT YOU TO ANSWER JUST TWO QUESTIONS FOR ME, BUT BEFORE YOU ANSWER THOSE, I WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT TWO OTHER QUESTIONS.

(The qustions may be written on the board, or they may just be dictated.)

Writing assignmen
(in class

FIRST, AND THIS IS ONE OF THE QUESTIONS YOU DO NOT HAVE TO WRITE AN ANSWER TO, WHAT DO YOU THINK ANTONY WILL TRY TO DO WHEN HE HAS A CHANCE TO SPEAK TO THE ROMAN CITIZENS AT CAESAR'S FUNERAL? SECOND, AFTER HEARING THIS LAST SPEECH, WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE HUMILITY THAT ANTONY HAS JUST SHOWN IN PLEADING WITH BRUTUS? THINK ABOUT THESE QUESTIONS: I DO NOT WANT TO DISCUSS THEM RIGHT NOW. HOWEVER, THE NEXT TWO QUESTIONS I WANT YOU TO WRITE ANSWERS TO. FIRST, WHAT DID ANTONY SAY IN THE SPEECH YOU JUST HEARD? HE IS PREDICTING SOMETHING. IN JUST ONE SENTENCE, TELL ME WHAT ANTONY HAS SAID WILL HAPPEN AS A RESULT OF CAESAR'S ASSASSINATION.

(Give them time to write this answer, allowing them to refer to their books, but reminding them you want just one sentence.)

ALL RIGHT, HERE IS THE SECOND QUESTION I WANT YOU TO ANSWER. WHY DID SHAKESPEARE WRITE THIS SPEECH AT ALL? WHY DID HE NOT JUST END THE SCENE WHEN THE CONSPIRATORS LEFT THE STAGE?

Discussion of written answers

(When the students have answered this question, collect the papers and, taking one question at a time, read sample student answers and ask for reaction. How much trouble the one-sentence paraphrase should give students will depend on the class, but it should be possible in any class to find satisfactory ones.

It is intended that the preliminary questions should lead students to consider the dramatic function of the scene in answering the second written question. In other words, the scene is there because it does something to and for the audience watching the play. Although students may be able to supply many other interesting suggestions, the answers that should be reinforced are those that deal with (1) revealing Antony's intentions to avenge Caesar, (2) arousing interest in and anticipation of the oration scene to follow, and (3) establishing Antony's skill as a dissembler and practical psychologist--and as a powerful speaker--so as to make his later performance credible.

If the students do not come up with these functions of the speech, it should not be difficult to elicit some form of them by questioning. Summarize the points about the function of the scene, trying to use this summary to arouse interest in what Antony is going to do. These papers, by the way, may be marked and returned or not, as you please.)

SO, SHAKESPEARE HAS LET US KNOW THAT ANTONY WAS BEING "MEEK AND GENTLE" IN ORDER TO GET A CHANCE TO TALK TO THE ROMAN MOB. HE INTENDS TO USE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO START A REVOLUTION AGAINST

THE CONSPIRATORS. HE MUST HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF CONFIDENCE IN HIS SPEAKING ABILITY, TO TAKE SUCH RISKS FOR ONE CHANCE TO SPEAK TO THE MOB. LET US MOVE ON TO THE NEXT SCENE AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS WHEN ANTONY HAS HIS CHANCE.

ANTONY'S FUNERAL ORATION

preface

Antony's funeral oration is certainly the most famous thing in Julius Caesar and one of the all-time favorites of English teachers. The oration scene offers the richest opportunity in the play for involving the whole class in a dramatic event. There is so much that can be said about the scene and so much that can be done with it, so many ways in which the scene can be used--that we have found ourselves unable to make decisions about reducing our treatment of the scene to managable proportions. We had too much already, but we found ourselves wanting to add more, while being unable to bear deleting any part of what we had.

So what we have done on the following pages is to present two separate treatments of the scene. The first is in the nature of a production of the scene, and we suggest that it be undertaken only if the teacher is sure it will work well. The teacher should feel confident in his own ability, the class should be one that has done very well in the earlier dramatic work, there should be in the class several students of outstanding dramatic ability. Otherwise, the doing of the scene may become a labor for both teachers and students and the final activity may be no more edifying than reading the scene around the class.

The second approach to the scene combines rhetorical analysis with dramatic analysis and more highly structured role-playing. This is the approach probably more suited to most classes. Most of the teachers who used the original version, however, found that the lesson was too detailed and too lengthy. But there was no agreement among these teachers as to which parts of the lesson should be omitted or abbreviated. Each part of it has been both praised and criticized, used and ignored.

Generally, it was possible to detect these patterns in the alterations that teachers have made in adapting this lesson to particular groups of students. Teachers with more able students have tended to throw the burden of the analysis upon the students; and they have tended to foreshorten the analysis of structure (feeling their students did not need it) and to concentrate on Antony's motives and the psychology of the scene. Teachers of average students have tended to use the lesson more or less as written, but to speed it up or shorten it if they felt that their students were being overwhelmed or losing interest. Teachers with slower students have tended to present rather than elicit the analyses, and to drastically condense them, feeling that there was a danger these activities might bore the students and risk losing the momentum built up in the earlier lessons. The teachers of slower students have also tended to prefer continuing the emphasis upon the action and the visual aspects of the scene, as opposed to giving attention to its language and rhetorical structure.

In these circumstances, what we have decided to do is to include more material than any teacher will probably want and to allow each teacher to use his judgment in deciding what to use and what to discard. So we present the teacher with surfeit of suggestions and trust him to pick out what may be most useful in his specific situation. But we should note that we have observed it is often the case that, even though a teacher may have decided not to deal with a particular aspect of the oration, that aspect may become a matter of discussion because of a student question or because of something that happens during the acting out of the scene. Therefore, one way of explaining what we have done here is to say we have provided an abundance of suggestions and ideas which will make it easier for the teacher to be as flexible as necessary in dealing with the scene in class.

The first treatment of the funeral oration scene consists simply of a series of suggestions for organizing and structuring a "production" of the scene. During the course of such a production, it will undoubtedly be necessary, since student actors are not going to be able to realize the scene without assistance, to cover some of the material contained in the second version of the lesson. But in the version that stresses the acting, it will be development of the scene itself that dictates what information and analyses will be necessary, and when. And, since there is no way to predict how the scene may go in any particular class, we suggest simply that the teacher who sets out to have the scene acted should first carefully consider the analyses in the second version of the lesson.

Another possible variation in treatment of the scene, one whose success depends on the teacher's histrionic abilities, would be for the teacher to play the role of Antony, while the class plays the mob. If this variation were to be chosen, the teacher would be responsible for making clear by his performance Antony's strategy and his motivations, while the suggestions given below for handling the mob's reactions could be used just as if a student were playing Antony.

first version

Before undertaking a classroom dramatization of Act III, Scene ii, you need to ask three important questions about time, space, and personnel.

(1) How many days can the class spend on this scene? The amount of time available will dictate how much of the scene should be acted out. For one or two class periods you should attempt little more than Antony's speech, perhaps beginning at line 60 with Brutus': "Good countrymen, let me depart alone..." and concluding with line 144: "The will, the will! We will hear Caesar's will." For a longer project it is possible to do the entire scene up through the exit of the crowd, line 263. And, of course, some compromise between these two alternatives can be reached by deleting passages within the first 260 lines (e.g., lines 173-244). Much of the analysis in the second version of the lesson would be developed indirectly in the process of dramatizing the scene.

(2) The second preliminary question you should ask requires an affirmative answer: Is there a place where the class can rehearse and make noise without disturbing other classes? Since the citizens and their reactions are such an essential part of the scene, there is not much sense in acting it out at all if the students can not simulate an unruly crowd. The most logical place to conduct the class would be the school auditorium. Another possibility might be outdoors and away from the building, perhaps at a stairway of some sort so the orators could be positioned above the crowd.

(3) The final preliminary question concerns the actors: Are there students in the class who can handle the roles of Brutus and Antony and who are willing to practice on their own outside of class? Act III, Scene ii is almost perfect for a classroom dramatization because even the most inept student in the class can be involved as a crowd member, but interest will quickly wane if you must spend a lot of time coaching the orators.

If, after considering these basic questions, you decide to go ahead with the staging of this scene, your major problem as director will be to get the crowd members to simulate a chaotic mob without actually becoming chaotic. One possible method of doing this is outlined below.

(1) After casting the parts of Antony and Brutus, assign the parts of first, second, third, and fourth citizen with equal care. Choose boys or girls who have some natural qualities of leadership, for in addition to having the two or three lines ascribed to them in the script, these students will serve as "crowd leaders." As leaders they should be instructed to mill about in front of the orators. (If the scene is staged in an auditorium, it might be effective to have Brutus and Antony deliver their speeches on the apron of the stage and have the crowd and crowd leaders mill about in the orchestra area in front of the apron. The difference in levels will prevent the principal speaker from becoming lost in the crowd and will confine the milling crowd to an area in front of the speaker.) (5)

(2) Divide the remainder of the class into four groups and assign each group to a specific crowd leader. Each leader, then, should have four to six followers. The

followers should not carry scripts and should be instructed to try to keep close to their leaders (who, remember, will be milling about). Furthermore, they should echo the sentiments of their leader whenever he speaks; they might ad lib agreement or restate what the leader has said in slightly different terms. It will help if the crowd leader will actually address his remarks to his followers and if they will address their ad libs to one another as well as to the orator.

(3) It is, of course, important that the crowd not remain dumb-mouthed during the orations, and you must note in advance where crowd reactions are called for. Part of Antony's oration is annotated below as an example of the kind of instructions you can give the crowd leaders. The leaders should be given prompt scripts and told to mark their scripts in the spots where they are responsible for beginning a "spontaneous" reaction. Each leader should rehearse his "citizens."

Naturally, the ad libs are merely suggestions. The precise words are not important; the fact that the citizens are listening and reacting to the orators' comments is important. If the first part of the scene is worked through several times, the students should be able to work well on their own through the rest of it.

(4) It would be advisable to tape record the rehearsals of this scene from the very first run-through. The students will not only enjoy hearing themselves, they will quickly learn to modulate their reactions and to avoid making the crowd noises sound like a choral response. Also, as the rehearsals progress, Antony and Brutus should begin to modulate their voices so as to alway be "on top of" the crowd. And they well may find themselves beginning to address certain remarks to specific citizens in the mob.

One possible way of summing up the exercise is to point out that perhaps the most interesting "character" in the scene is neither Antony nor Brutus, but the mob. Play back a tape recording one final time asking the students to concentrate on the personality of the mob.

CITIZENS' PROMPT SCRIPT

(It can be assumed that Caesar's body already
lies on the apron of the stage in the center.)

BRUTUS. Good countrymen, let me depart alone,	*(standing beside Caesar's body)*
And, for my sake, stay here with Antony°	° *FOURTH CITIZEN (to his followers). Who wants to hear another speech?*
Do grace to Caesar's corpse, and grace his speech	
Tending to Caesar's glories,° which Mark Antony,	° *FIRST CITIZEN (to his followers). Glories? Ha!*
By permission, is allowed to make.°	° *FOURTH CITIZEN (beginning to exit up a side aisle; to his followers). Let's go.*
I do entreat you, not a man depart	
Save I alone, till Antony have spoken....	
FIRST CITIZEN. Stay, ho! And let us hear Mark Antony.	
THIRD CITIZEN. Let him go up into the public chair; We'll hear him. Noble Antony, go up.	
ANTONY (about to ascend). For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you.	*(he has entered amongst the crowd; now he goes up onto the stage)*
FOURTH CITIZEN. What does he say of Brutus?	*(moving back toward the stage)*
THIRD CITIZEN. He says, for Brutus' sake, He finds himself beholding to us all.	*(moving toward FOURTH CITIZEN)*
FOURTH CITIZEN. 'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here.	
FIRST CITIZEN. This Caesar was a tyrant.	*(moving toward THIRD and FOURTH CITIZENS)*

THIRD CITIZEN. Nay, that's certain,
We are blest that Rome is rid of him.

SECOND CITIZEN.
Peace! let us hear what Antony can say.

ANTONY (now in the pulpit).
You gentle Romans...

CITIZENS.° Peace, ho! Let us hear him.

ANTONY.
Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.°
The evil that men do lives after them
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Caesar.° The noble Brutus
Hath told you Caesar was ambitious;
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.°
Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest--
For Brutus is an honorable man;°
So are they all, all honorable men;
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral
He was my friend, faithful and just to me;
But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honorable man.°
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill;

° *(to be spoken only by SECOND CITIZEN and his followers; FIRST, THIRD, and FOURTH CITIZENS continue to ad lib their discontents with their respective followers. ANTONY should not have silence when he begins.)*

° *(by now the crowd is paying full attention)*

° *FIRST CITIZEN (to his followers). Yes, bury him and get it over with! SECOND CITIZEN (simultaneously, to his followers). He was a tyrant!*

° *FIRST and SECOND CITIZENS (repeat above reactions)*

° *THIRD CITIZEN (to ANTONY). Long live Brutus! (then to his followers) He's talking about Brutus.*

° *THIRD CITIZEN (to his followers). Brutus is right. Caesar was ambitious.*

Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?°
When the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:°
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honorable man.°
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which thrice he did refuse. Was this ambition?°
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And, sure, he is an honorable man.°
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause;
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?°
O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.

FIRST CITIZEN.
Methinks there is much reason in his sayings.

SECOND CITIZEN.
If thou consider rightly of the matter,
Caesar has had great wrong.

THIRD CITIZEN. Has he, masters?
I fear there will a worse come in his place.

° *FOURTH CITIZEN (to his followers) What ransoms? What did we get ou of it?*

° *FIRST CITIZEN (nodding to his followers). He has a point.*

° *THIRD CITIZEN (to his followers). Marcus Brutus is our finest citiz SECOND CITIZEN (simultaneously to his followers). Maybe Brutus was ambitious.*

° *SECOND CITIZEN (to ANTONY). No! Caesar was the people's friend.*

° *FOURTH CITIZEN (to his followers) Honorable? Did he treat Caesar honorably?*

° *(silence; the crowd is now totall with Antony and ashamed of its earlier sentiments.)*

(the following lines are to be spoken by the crowd leaders to thei respective followers. The followers should respond in an undertone of affirmation so that the FIRST, SECOI THIRD, and FOURTH CITIZENS' speeches can follow one another in rapid succession and at the same time seem to stand out from a multitude c reactions. This will be more realistic than having the majority of the crowd remain silent.)

FOURTH CITIZEN.
Marked ye his words? He would not take the crown;
Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.

FIRST CITIZEN.
If it be found so, some will dear abide it.

SECOND CITIZEN.
Pour soul! His eyes are red as fire with weeping.

THIRD CITIZEN.
There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony.

FOURTH CITIZEN.
Now mark him, he begins again to speak. *(the crowd becomes silent)*

second version

Summary

THE CITIZENS OF ROME ARE GATHERED IN THE FORUM, WHICH IS A GREAT PUBLIC SQUARE. BRUTUS SPEAKS TO THE CROWD FIRST--VERY ELOQUENTLY--AND CONVINCES THEM THAT CAESAR HAD TO DIE FOR THE GOOD OF ROME. ANTONY ENTERS WITH CAESAR'S BODY AND THE CROWD HOOTS AND BOOS. CAESAR'S BODY IS PLACED ON A RAISED PLATFORM BELOW THE PULPIT THAT IS USED BY PUBLIC SPEAKERS. BRUTUS ASKS THE CROWD TO LISTEN TO ANTONY AND THEN HE LEAVES, TO THE CHEERS OF THE CROWD. AS ANTONY GOES UP TO THE PULPIT, THE CROWD IS MUTTERING AND SHOUTING THREATS AT HIM. BRUTUS HAS CONVINCED THEM CAESAR WAS EVIL AND THEY ARE DARING ANTONY TO SAY ANYTHING AGAINST BRUTUS.

Silent reading of first part of Antony's oration

WHAT CAN ANTONY SAY IN THIS SITUATION? TAKE OUT YOUR COPIES OF JULIUS CAESAR AND SEE FOR YOURSELF. TURN TO ACT THREE, SCENE TWO, PAGE ______. BEGIN TO READ AT LINE SEVENTY AND READ THROUGH ANTONY'S SPEECH THAT ENDS AT LINE ONE HUNDRED TWELVE. READ IT SLOWLY AND TRY TO MAKE SENSE OF WHAT ANTONY IS SAYING AND ALSO TRY TO IMAGINE WHAT BOTH ANTONY AND THE CROWD MIGHT BE DOING.

ANTONY'S FUNERAL ORATION

Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears:
I come to *bury* Caesar, not to *praise* him:
The *evil* that men do, *lives* after them,
The *good* is oft *interred* with their bones,
So let it be with Caesar.

The noble Brutus,
Hath told you Caesar was *ambitious*:
If it were so, it was a *grievous* fault,
And *grievously* hath Caesar answered it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest
(For Brutus is an *honorable man*,
So are they *all; all honorable men*)
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful, and just to me;
But *Brutus* says, he was *ambitious*,
And *Brutus* is an *honorable* man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms, did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Caesar seem *ambitious*?

When that the *poor* have *cried*, *Caesar* hath *wept*:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff,
Yet *Brutus* says, he was *ambitious*:
And *Brutus* is an *honorable* man.

You all did see, that on the Lupercal,
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which *he* did *thrice refuse*.

Was this *ambition*?
Yet Brutus says, he was *ambitious*:
And sure he is an *honorable* man.

I *speak* not to disprove *what*
Brutus *spoke*,
But here I am to *speak what* I do *know*;
You all did *love him once*, not
without *cause*,
What *cause* withholds *you then*, to
mourn for *him*?
O judgment! thou art fled to brutish
beasts,
And men have lost their reason.

Bear with me,
My heart is in the coffin there with Cae
And I must pause, till it come back to m

Special copy of oration handed out

(6)

I AM GIVING YOU A COPY OF ANTONY'S SPEECH THAT HAS BEEN MARKED TO EMPHASIZE THE WAY THE SPEECH IS PUT TOGETHER. WHILE IT IS BEING PASSED OUT, LET ME REMIND YOU THAT, IF ANTONY'S SPEECH IS GOING TO BE EFFECTIVE ON THE STAGE, IT MUST BE SPOKEN IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE AUDIENCE IN THE THEATRE BELIEVES HIS WORDS ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO SWAY A HOSTILE CROWD.

BUT ALL THE ACTOR AND THE DIRECTOR HAVE TO WORK WITH ARE THE WORDS ON THE PAGE, INK MARKS ON PAPER. "FRIENDS, ROMANS, COUNTRYMEN" AND SO FORTH. HOW DOES THE ACTOR KNOW HOW TO SPEAK THEM? HE HAS AT LEAST THREE SORTS OF INFORMATION, BESIDES THE MEANING OF THE WORDS, TO HELP HIM: THE SITUATION, THE PUNCTUATION, AND THE STRUCTURE OF THE DIALOGUE.

Punctuation, situation, structure as guides

Situation

THE FIRST SORT OF INFORMATION TO GUIDE OUR READING IS THE INFORMATION WE HAVE ABOUT THE SITUATION IN WHICH THE SPEECH IS GIVEN. WE KNOW WHAT ANTONY WANTS HIS SPEECH TO DO. HE WANTS TO DISCREDIT BRUTUS AND MOVE THE MOB TO AVENGE CAESAR. BUT WE ALSO KNOW THAT ANTONY REALIZES HE CANNOT OPENLY ATTACK BRUTUS WITHOUT BEING ASSAULTED BY THE MOB, WHICH IS ON BRUTUS' SIDE WHEN HE STARTS. SO WHAT ANTONY HAS TO DO IS TO PRETEND TO PRAISE BRUTUS WHILE REALLY MAKING THE CROWD SEE THAT CAESAR DID NOT DESERVE TO DIE AND THAT BRUTUS IS A TRAITOR AND A MURDERER.

SECOND, THERE IS THE PUNCTUATION OF THE SENTENCES THAT MAKE UP THE SPEECH. IF YOU WILL COMPARE THE TWO VERSIONS YOU HAVE, ON THIS SHEET AND IN YOUR BOOK, YOU WILL SEE THAT THE PUNCTUATION IS DIFFERENT IN THE TWO VERSIONS. THE PUNCTUATION IN THE BOOK FOLLOWS THE NORMAL RULES OF PUNCTUATION YOU FOLLOW WHEN YOU WRITE A PAPER. THE PUNCTUATION IN THE OTHER VERSION, AS FAR AS WE KNOW, IS THE PUNCTUATION SHAKESPEARE USED. AT LEAST, THIS PUNCTUATION APPEARS IN THE FIRST PRINTED EDITION OF THE PLAY, WHICH PEOPLE THINK PROBABLY WAS SET UP FROM A SCRIPT USED BY ACTORS IN SHAKESPEARE'S OWN ACTING COMPANY.

Punctuation

IF THAT IS TRUE, THIS PUNCTUATION IS INTENDED AS A GUIDE TO THE SPEAKER OF THE PART. LET US DECIDE ON SOME RULES FOR USING THE DIFFERENT PUNCTUATION MARKS AS GUIDES TO SPEAKING, AND THEN READ THE SPEECH AGAIN. IN THE SPEECH AS IT IS PRINTED ON YOUR SHEET, THERE ARE SEVEN MARKS OF PUNCTUATION THAT MUST BE CONSIDERED. (NOT COUNTING THE ITALICIZED WORDS.* I'LL EXPLAIN THOSE LATER.) One is the QUESTION MARK, WHICH SHOULD CAUSE NO TROUBLE.

(Ask the students for several sample questions. Point out the rising pitch at the end.)

THE SECOND IS THE PERIOD. WHAT DOES A PERIOD TELL A READER HE SHOULD DO?

(Come to a full stop; allow at least a brief period of silence before continuing.)

THE THIRD IS THE COMMA. WE KNOW HOW COMMAS ARE USUALLY USED IN WRITING. BUT SOMETIMES A COMMA IS INSERTED WHERE A SPEAKER WOULD NORMALLY HAVE TO PAUSE FOR A BREATH; AT OTHER TIMES A COMMA MAY INDICATE A SHORT PAUSE TO EMPHASIZE A WORD. AND SOMETIMES, IN OLD BOOKS, A COMMA MAY INDICATE THE WRITER OR PRINTER WAS FOLLOWING A RULE OF GRAMMAR THAT WE NO LONGER FOLLOW. BUT LET US READ THE SPEECH ALLOWING A BRIEF PAUSE FOR EACH COMMA.

THE FOURTH PUNCTUATION MARK IS THE SEMICOLON. IN READING ALOUD, WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE COME TO A SEMICOLON?

(Accept student suggestions.)

LOCATE THE SEMICOLONS IN THIS SPEECH. WHAT DO THEY SEEM TO CALL FOR--A SHORT PAUSE, A LONG PAUSE, A COMPLETE STOP?

(Allow the students to look at the speech and make suggestions. Probably the best answer in this case is that the semicolon should be treated by the speaker as calling for a full stop, just like a period; but to the reader it is meant to indicate close relationship between the substance of the clauses separated by the semicolon.

What will be important is that an agreement be reached about how the speaker should treat the semicolon, and that the semicolon is distinguished from the colon.)

THE FIFTH PUNCTUATION MARK WE HAVE TO CONSIDER IS THE COLON. SHAKESPEARE USES THE COLON IN DIFFERENT WAYS THAN WE USE IT. BUT IT MAY MEAN ABOUT THE SAME THING TO THE SPEAKER OF THE SPEECH. WHEN YOU ARE READING ALOUD AND COME TO A COLON, WHAT DO YOU DO?

(Accept student suggestions; or write examples such as the following on the blackboard:

DEAR SIR:
GENTLEMEN:

THIS IS WHAT HE DID: WON THE HUNDRED YARD DASH, BROKE THE HIGH HURDLES RECORD....

THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS ARE ON THE COMMITTEE: JOHN, BILL, JANE, AND STEWART.

Ask several students to read each of the examples. Ask other students to describe how the speakers used their voices when they came to the colon. Help the students agree on a convention for handling colons.)

ALL RIGHT, WE NOW HAVE A RULE FOR HANDLING COLONS.

(Summarize and illustrate the rule by reading the first three lines of Antony's oration.)

THE SIXTH PUNCTUATION MARK WE NEED TO NOTICE OCCURS ONLY ONCE. IN THIS VERSION OF THE SPEECH THERE ARE PARENTHESES. HOW WAS THE SENTENCE PUNCTUATED IN YOUR BOOK?

(Some modern editions substitute a pair of dashes for the parentheses.)

THE LAST PUNCTUATION MARK WE NEED TO CONSIDER IS THE EXCLAMATION POINT. HOW DO WE READ A SENTENCE ENDING WITH AN EXCLAMATION POINT?

(Let the students decide.)

ONE SORT OF INFORMATION WE HAVE, THEN, ABOUT HOW TO READ THE SPEECH IS GIVEN TO US BY THE PUNCTUATION.

Structure

A THIRD SOURCE OF INFORMATION IS THE STRUCTURE OF THE SPEECH ITSELF. ANTONY'S SPEECH IS VERY CAREFULLY CONSTRUCTED TO DO WHAT HE WANTS IT TO DO. AND ONE PLACE TO START TO ANALYZE IT, WHETHER WE WANT TO ACT IT OR JUST TO IMAGINE HOW IT MIGHT BE ACTED, IS WITH THE QUESTION OF HOW IT IS PUT TOGETHER. PART OF THE JOB OF ANALYZING ITS STRUCTURE HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE FOR YOU, ON THE SHEET THAT YOU HAVE.

THE BASIC DEVICE BY WHICH THE SPEECH GETS ITS EFFECT IS REPETITION. YOU UNDOUBTEDLY NOTICED THE REPETITIONS OF WORDS AND PHRASES THE FIRST TIME YOU READ THE SPEECH: "CAESAR WAS AMBITIOUS," "BRUTUS IS AN HONORABLE MAN." BUT REPETITIONS OF DIFFERENT SORTS ARE EVERYWHERE IN THE SPEECH, AND A RECOGNITION OF THEM WILL GIVE ONE A GOOD DEAL OF GUIDANCE ABOUT HOW TO READ THE SPEECH, IF WE WORK ON THE PRINCIPLE THAT OUR READING SHOULD EMPHASIZE THE REPETITIONS WHERE THEY OCCUR.

THE COPY OF THE SPEECH THAT YOU HAVE HAS EACH SENTENCE PRINTED SEPARATELY AS IF IT WERE A STANZA OF POETRY, SEPARATED FROM THE SENTENCES BEFORE AND AFTER IT. LOOK AT THE FIRST STANZA. WILL SOMEONE READ THIS STANZA, PAYING ATTENTION TO THE PUNCTUATION, AND EMPHASIZING THOSE WORDS THAT ARE ITALICIZED.

(Have a student read the "stanza." Then ask the class...)

DID THE STANZA READ LIKE THAT MEAN MORE TO YOU THAN IT DID WHEN YOU FIRST READ IT?

(Have the students who respond try to explain why it "meant more," if they say it did.)

BEFORE WE GO ON, LET'S LOOK AT THE VERY FIRST LINE AGAIN. CONSIDERING THE SITUATION IN WHICH ANTONY BEGINS HIS ORATION, HOW MIGHT THIS LINE HAVE TO BE SPOKEN?

Situation--
how are the
first lines
spoken?

(The crowd is buzzing; Antony has already tried to start once--"You gentle Romans"--and been cut off. Citizens have had to call out for quiet.)

IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THERE ARE SEVERAL WAYS ANTONY'S FIRST WORDS MIGHT BE DELIVERED. HOW DO YOU THINK THEY SHOULD BE READ?

(Try to get the students to suggest some of these ways:

(1) One possibility is that Antony waits for the crowd to quiet down and only then begins to speak. In this case, the line is a formal opening to his speech, and may be delivered almost conversationally.

(2) Another possibility is that the line is shouted over the noise of the mob, in order to get their attention. If the line is to serve this function, either the entire line may be shouted, with Antony actually beginning his address with the second line; or (3) only the first three words--"Friends, Romans, Countrymen"--may be shouted, the address beginning with the request: "Lend me your ears."

Shakespeare's punctuation [a colon at the end of the line] suggests the first interpretation. Modern punctuation [a period] allows either of the other interpretations, and the dramatic situation recommends them.

Another, less likely, reading (4) might be suggested, and may be acceptable. Antony begins quietly, realizes he cannot be heard, then raises his voice: "Friends, Romans, Countrymen--LEND ME YOUR EARS!" Still another (5) possible interpretation would be for Antony to be straining to speak over the crowd noise throughout the first two or three lines; this might be more "naturalistic," but would be unsatisfactory to most of the audience.

The main purpose of this discussion is not to decide how Antony should speak the line, but to involve the students with the speech, in its setting, and to force them to deal with some real problems of interpretation.)

HOW ABOUT THE REST OF THE FIRST STANZA, NOW. WHY ARE CERTAIN WORDS ITALICIZED IN IT?

(Let the students offer suggestions. The general principle should already be clear. Ask students to be more concrete about the kind of repetitions present in the first stanza.)

THE ITALICIZING THROUGHOUT THE SPEECH IS TO EMPHASIZE SOME OF THE MORE IMPORTANT REPETITIONS. IN THE SECOND LINE, FOR INSTANCE, "I COME TO BURY CAESAR, NOT TO PRAISE HIM." " I COME TO BLANK, NOT TO BLANK." IN THIS CASE THE STRUCTURE EMPHASIZES A CONTRAST. AND BY EMPHASIZING THE CONTRASTED WORDS WHEN THE SPEECH IS READ ALOUD, THE MEANING MAY BE MADE CLEARER.

LOOK AT THE NEXT TWO LINES. WILL SOMEONE READ THEM?

(Have a student read: "The *evil* that men do *lives* after them, the *good* is oft *interred* with their bones.")

THE WORDS WHICH FALL IN THE SAME POSITION IN THE TWO CLAUSES HAVE CONTRASTING MEANINGS: EVIL LIVES: GOOD IS INTERRED OR BURIED. EMPHASIZING THE KEY WORDS AGAIN MAKES THE SENSE CLEARER.

"THE EVIL THAT MEN DO, LIVES AFTER THEM, THE GOOD IS OFT INTERRED WITH THEIR BONES, SO LET IT BE WITH CAESAR." WHAT DOES "IT" REFER TO?

(To the whole state of affairs described in the preceding two lines.)

WOULD ANY WORD IN THE LAST HALF LINE NEED TO BE EMPHASIZED?

(Probably not; possibly a slight emphasis on "it," or on "Caesar.")

LOOK AT THE NEXT STANZA. FOR THE MOMENT IGNORE THE ITALICIZED WORDS THAT ARE UNDERLINED. BUT DO PAY ATTENTION, AS WE GO ALONG, TO WHAT HAPPENS AS THE WORDS "AMBITIOUS" AND "HONORABLE" ARE REPEATED. WHEN WE COME BACK TO LOOK AT THE WHOLE SPEECH AGAIN, YOU MAY WANT TO ADD PARTICULAR KINDS OF EMPHASIS TO THOSE WORDS, TO ALERT THE AUDIENCE TO THEM.

Repetitions of key words

WHY ARE "GRIEVOUS" AND "GRIEVOUSLY" UNDERLINED IN THIS STANZA?

(To point out the repetition; Shakespeare is playing on the word to emphasize that the punishment fit the alleged crime.

Have a student read the stanza. If the emphasis the student puts on the underlined word is so heavy as to introduce a stop following the word, instruct him that the emphasis needs only to be strong enough that the word will stand out and be noticed. If the underlined words are not stressed heavily enough to be distinguishable, ask the student to read the stanza again.

NOTE: The reason for giving attention at this point only to stress is this: in Antony's highly rhetorical speech, there are discernible reasons for stressing certain words--those that parallel or echo or contrast with other words. The intention is to convince the students that there is, in the speech itself, information, beyond punctuation, that helps one to understand how to read the speech.)

WILL SOMEONE READ THE NEXT STANZA?

(Have a student read:

"Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest
[For Brutus is an *honorable man,'*
So are they *all; all honorable men*]
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral."

In line with what has been said, the two appearances of "honorable"--underlined in the script--should be stressed. The two occurences of "Brutus," not emphasized, might also be stressed.

If the student reader does give emphasis to these words, as well as to the underlined ones, even though the emphasis may make the reading a bit heavy, it may be taken as a sign he has understood what the lesson has been getting at so far.)

Establishment of associations

ANTONY IS BEGINNING TO ESTABLISH AN ASSOCIATION BETWEEN THE NAME "BRUTUS" AND THE PHRASE "HONORABLE MAN." ALMOST THE SAME PHRASING IS REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES. AS WE GO ALONG, ASK YOURSELF HOW THE WORDS "BRUTUS," "HONORABLE," AND "AMBITION" WOULD BE SPOKEN EACH TIME THEY ARE REPEATED. WHAT, BESIDES JUST EMPHASIZING THEM, WOULD AN ACTOR DO WITH THESE WORDS.?

"HE WAS MY *F*RIEND, *F*AITHFUL, AND JUST TO ME: BUT *BRUTUS* SAYS, HE WAS *AMBITIOUS,* AND *BRUTUS* IS AN *HONORABLE* MAN." NOTE THAT TWO SORTS OF REPETITION ARE AT WORK HERE. FIRST, THERE IS REPETITION WITHIN THE STANZA: "BRUTUS SAYS," AND "BRUTUS IS." SECOND, THERE IS REPETITION OF, OR ECHOES OF, PHRASES AND SENTENCES USED EARLIER IN THE SPEECH.

ANTONY IS SETTING THIS UP ALMOST LIKE A SONG, WITH A VERSE AND A CHORUS OR REFRAIN. HE SPEAKS A VERSE ABOUT CAESAR AND FOLLOWS IT WITH A REFRAIN THAT HE VARIES A LITTLE EACH TIME: "BUT BRUTUS SAYS HE WAS AMBITIOUS, AND BRUTUS IS AN HONORABLE MAN."

Refrain

SOMEONE READ THE NEXT SEVEN LINES, PLEASE.

("He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?

When that the *poor* have *cried, Caesar* hath
wept:
Ambition should be made of *s*terner *s*tuff,
Yet *Brutus* says he was ambitious:
And *Brutus* is an honorable man."

Note what the student reader does with the words "ambition-ambitious" and "honorable"--you may want to refer back to his performance later.

Probably a heavy stress placed by the student upon "this" in the third line would be an indication he understands what Antony is doing.

If the student did not adequately handle the rhetorical question, ask him to read the first three lines again.)

"WHEN THAT THE *POOR* HAVE *CRIED, CAESAR* HATH *WEPT:* AMBITION SHOULD BE MADE OF STERNER STUFF." AND THEN THE CHORUS AGAIN: "YET *BRUTUS* SAYS, HE WAS AMBITIOUS: AND *BRUTUS* IS AN HONORABLE MAN."

(The parallelism here may be shown on the blackboard:

$$\begin{tikzcd}\text{POOR} \arrow[r] \arrow[d] & \text{CRIED} \arrow[d] \\ \text{CAESAR} \arrow[r] & \text{WEPT}\end{tikzcd}$$

The implication is clear: Caesar was in sympathy with the common people of Rome.)

AND THEN ANOTHER VERSE. LOOK AT THE NEXT THREE LINES. WHO IS "HIM"?

(Caesar.)

THE LUPERCAL WAS A ROMAN HOLIDAY DEVOTED TO LOVE; IT IS THE ANCESTOR OF OUR VALENTINE'S DAY. ANTONY IS REFERRING HERE TO A SCENE EARLIER IN THE PLAY, AND HE IS ASSUMING THAT MOST OF THE CROWD HAD SEEN HIM OFFER CAESAR THE CROWN. NOTE THE REPETITION OF STRUCTURE. "I THRICE PRESENTED: HE THRICE REFUSED." THEN THE QUESTION, THAT ENDS THE VERSE: "WAS THIS AMBITION?" "YOU ALL DID SEE, THAT ON THE LUPERCAL *I THRICE PRESENTED* HIM A KINGLY CROWN, WHICH *HE DID THRICE REFUSE*. WAS THIS AMBITION?" AND THEN THE CHORUS: "YET BRUTUS SAYS HE WAS AMBITIOUS: AND SURE HE IS AN HONORABLE MAN."

(You might note here that, although Shakespeare is ignoring the conventional rules of pronoun reference, the reader has no more trouble following the references than he would have in conversation where usage is similarly loose.)

What Antony is doing

SEE WHAT ANTONY IS DOING? HE DESCRIBES AN ACTION OF CAESAR'S THAT WAS PUBLIC SPIRITED OR GENEROUS. AND THEN HE ASKS, "IS THAT SOMETHING A POWER-HUNGRY MAN WOULD DO?" AND THE CROWD, OF COURSE, SAYS TO ITSELF, "NO, IT ISN'T." THEN ANTONY SAYS, "BUT BRUTUS HAS TOLD YOU CAESAR WAS HUNGRY FOR POWER." AND THE CROWD THINKS, "THEN BRUTUS WAS LYING." AND ANTONY SAYS, "BRUTUS IS AN HONORABLE MAN." AND THE CROWD THINKS, "NO, HE IS NOT."

THE NEXT STANZA. WILL SOMEONE READ JUST THE FIRST TWO LINES OF IT PLEASE?

("I *speak* not to disprove *what* Brutus *spoke*
But I am here to *speak what* I do *know*.")

THE REPETITIONS ARE COMPLICATED HERE, EVEN MORE SO THAN THE ITALICS INDICATE. BUT ASIDE FROM BRUTUS' NAME, ALL THE WORDS BUT ONE HAVE A SINGLE SYLLABLE, AND THAT MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO STRESS ALL OF THE KEY WORDS.

(Read the lines again, emphasizing the staccato effect.)

AND THE NEXT TWO LINES.

(Have a student read:

"*You* all did *love him once*, not without *cause*,
What *cause* withholds *you* then, to *mourn* for *him*?")

NOTICE HOW THIS WORKS: "YOU DID LOVE HIM ONCE: YOU THEN MOURN FOR HIM," "NOT WITHOUT CAUSE: WHAT CAUSE WITHHOLDS." "CAUSE" LINKS THE TWO CLAUSES TOGETHER IN THE SAME WAY "GRIEVOUS" AND "ALL" DID IN EARLIER PLACES IN THE SPEECH. "IT WAS A GRIEVOUS FAULT, AND GRIEVOUSLY HATH CAESAR ANSWERED IT." "SO ARE THEY ALL: ALL HONORABLE MEN."

THE TWO CLAUSES ARE SO CONSTRUCTED THAT THE TWO LINES SEEM TO GO DOWNHILL FIRST, "YOU ALL DID LOVE HIM ONCE, NOT WITHOUT CAUSE," AND THEN UPHILL AGAIN, "WHAT CAUSE WITHHOLDS YOU THEN, TO MOURN FOR HIM?" AND YOU MIGHT SAY THAT "WITHHOLD" IS A KIND OF ECHO OF "WITHOUT," AND HELPS TO INCREASE THE EFFECT.

SOMETHING SO COMPLICATED CERTAINLY IS NOT ACCIDENTAL. SHAKESPEARE WROTE THE SENTENCE THIS WAY SO THAT IT WOULD HAVE A PARTICULAR SOUND AND RHYTHM WHEN SPOKEN. AND ONE WAY TO FIND OUT HOW IT SHOULD BE SPOKEN, IS TO FIND OUT HOW IT IS CONSTRUCTED. THEN YOU SPEAK IT SO AS TO MAKE THE CONSTRUCTION CLEAR TO YOUR LISTENER.

NOTHING IN THE REST OF THE SPEECH IS ITALICIZED. GO THROUGH IT AGAIN YOURSELF, LOOKING FOR REPETITIONS AND PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO PUNCTUATION.

(Give them a minute to examine the rest of the speech. Ask several students then to read the lines in turn, without intervening comments.

Read the final lines

The students should recognize the exclamation point as a signal of how "O judgment!" is to be read, and should emphasize the parallel "thou-fled-beasts": "men-lost-reason." They may, deliberately or unconsciously, stress the alliterative syllables in "brutish beasts."

After several students have read, allow the class to evaluate and discuss the various readings.)

Antony allows himse himself to become emotional

ANTONY HAS BEEN CALM AND WELL ORGANIZED UP TO THIS POINT. BUT AS YOU READ, SOME OF YOU PUT A GOOD DEAL OF EMOTION INTO THIS LAST SPEECH.

(Chances are some will have, because of the exclamation point, if not because of the imagery and the sense of the sentence.)

WHY? OR RATHER, LET ME ASK IT THIS WAY: WHY WOULD ANTONY SUDDENLY BECOME MORE EMOTIONAL?

(Read the sentence yourself, acting it out, before the students are allowed to answer.

Try to get the students to see that Antony's outburst is a change of pace and a climax. He feels he is getting the crowd with him, and this statement, following his preceding question to the crowd, is in fact supposed to seem--to the crowd--like an outpouring of Antony's personal grief. It is not addressed to the crowd, directly, but is an apostrophe to "Judgment.")

Antony's necessary actions

WHY DOES ANTONY SAY, "BEAR WITH ME"?

(If there is no satisfactory answer, ask...)

WHAT MIGHT ANTONY HAVE DONE BETWEEN THE TIME HE SAYS, "MEN HAVE LOST THEIR REASON" AND "BEAR WITH ME"?

(If no answer...)

THERE IS A NECESSARY ACTION INVOLVED HERE. THE PHRASE "BEAR WITH ME" WOULD MAKE NO SENSE UNLESS ANTONY HAD DONE SOMETHING SO THAT HE HAD TO ASK THE CROWD TO BEAR WITH HIM--WHICH MEANS HERE, TO EXCUSE HIM OR TO PUT UP WITH HIM. WHAT MIGHT ANTONY HAVE DONE AFTER THE EMOTIONAL SPEECH ABOUT MEN LOSING THEIR REASON?

Possible writing assignment

(The students may, if you wish, be asked to write a brief description of Antony's behavior. Such papers can help to diagnose student difficulties. The suggestions the students should make, in discussion or in writing should note that Antony must have paused, choked up with emotion, or stopped speaking to weep, or to keep from weeping. Whether the emotion was really overwhelming or not, the interruption is effective; it gives the crowd a chance to react to what he has said. Call the attention of the students to the remarks of the citizens after Antony stops speaking.)

ALL RIGHT, ANTONY HAS BROKEN DOWN, OR PRETENDED TO BREAK DOWN, WITH GRIEF. NOT ONLY HAS BRUTUS BEEN ESTABLISHED AS A LIAR, BUT THE CROWD IS BEGINNING TO FEEL GUILTY THAT THEY ARE NOT GRIEVING LIKE THIS GOOD, HONEST MAN ANTONY IS. THEN: "MY HEART IS IN THE COFFIN THERE WITH CAESAR, AND I MUST PAUSE TILL IT COME BACK TO ME." HOW WOULD ANTONY SAY THIS SPEECH, IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES?

(Probably he would almost whisper it, or be obviously holding back a sob.)

WHAT MIGHT HE DO AS HE SPOKE THIS SPEECH AND AFTERWARDS?

(Bow his head, kneel, turn from the crowd to hide his tears, etc.)

IN A MOVIE THAT WAS MADE OF JULIUS CAESAR THE ACTOR PLAYING ANTONY TURNED FROM THE CROWD AT THIS POINT, AND ACTED AS IF HE WERE WEEPING. AFTER A MOMENT OF SILENCE, THE CROWD BEGAN TO TALK, AND WHAT THEY SAID MADE IT CLEAR THAT ANTONY WAS HAVING THE EFFECT HE WANTED TO HAVE. THEN THE CAMERA CAME IN CLOSE-UP ON ANTONY'S FACE, WHICH WAS HIDDEN FROM THE CROWD, AND YOU SAW THAT, INSTEAD OF BEING GRIEF STRICKEN, ANTONY WAS SMILING AN EVIL LITTLE HEH-HEH-HEH GRIN.

Back to beginning

NOW I WANT TO GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THIS SPEECH AGAIN AND READ IT THROUGH, TRYING TO MAKE IT CLEAR WHAT ANTONY IS DOING IN EACH SENTENCE. BUT BEFORE WE DO, I SAID I WANTED US TO LOOK AT THREE WORDS THAT ARE REPEATED OVER AND OVER IN THE SPEECH: "BRUTUS," "AMBITIOUS," AND "HONORABLE." WHAT HAPPENS TO THESE WORDS AS THEY ARE REPEATED?

(Allow the students to discuss each word in turn. Do not impose an interpretation at this point. But try to be sure that the students decide on some sort of meaningful progression of inflections for each word. For example, "Brutus," beginning just as a name, is spoken more and more sneeringly. "Ambitious" is spoken more and more incredulously or with increasing outrage. "Honorable" becomes more and more loaded with sarcasm. Or, alternatively, have the students justify a reading that is consistently deadpan, mock-respectful throughout. After the discussion, have several students read the entire speech in turn, without interruption or comment, illustrating the suggested interpretations of the key words.)

LET'S LISTEN TO THE WHOLE SCENE (AGAIN) NOW, DONE BY PROFESSIONAL ACTORS.* AS YOU LISTEN TO THE ACTOR PLAYING ANTONY DO THE SCENE WE HAVE JUST GONE THROUGH, SEE HOW CLOSELY HIS READING OF IT RESEMBLES THE READING YOU HAVE JUST DONE, AFTER OUR ANALYZING THE WAY THE SPEECH WAS PUT TOGETHER. THEN, AS WE LISTEN TO THE PART OF THE SCENE WE HAVE NOT READ YET, NOTICE HOW THE REPETITIONS OF THE WORDS CONTINUE TO WORK THROUGHOUT THE SCENE. AND, REMEMBER, THIS ACTOR'S READING IS NOT THE "RIGHT" ONE--IT IS JUST ONE OF ANY NUMBER OF POSSIBLE GOOD INTERPRETATIONS.

(Play a recording of the scene, starting with Antony's oration, through to the end, i.e., to just before the entry of Octavius' servant.

Play recording

A few additional aspects of the scene that are relevant to Antony's character are discussed below, so that:

1. the students will have a fuller understanding of Antony when they go back to act the "confrontation" scene in the original form;

2. the students can be shown that a full understanding of a character, or of the play he is in, cannot be gotten in one reading or one viewing, but that what happens in the early part of a play must be interpreted in the light of what happens later. [This point probably does not have to be made explicitly.]: and

3. the students will see that there are some things about a Shakespearean play that cannot be fully understood without the kind of information that is to be found in the notes; but that, at the same time, this information is rarely crucial to the bare understanding of a play.

If the scene has excited the students, the whole scene is well worth whatever additional time you might wish to spend on it. At this point, the decision might be made to act out the whole scene, or part of it, as in Version 1.)

What has the reader learned?

FROM LISTENING TO THIS SCENE, WE LEARN SOMETHING MORE ABOUT BOTH ANTONY AND THE ROMAN MOB. WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT ANTONY?

(The students should have no trouble identifying pertinent characteristics of Antony: cunning, ruthless, a good orator and psychologist, and so on.)

AND WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT THE MOB?

(Fickle, emotional, violent, easily manipulated, etc.)

GOOD. BUT LET US LOOK MORE CLOSELY AT JUST ONE MORE SHORT SPEECH OF ANTONY'S AND SEE WHAT ELSE WE CAN LEARN ABOUT HIM THAT WE MIGHT HAVE MISSED JUST LISTENING TO THE RECORD OR JUST READING THE TEXT.

LOOK AT ACT III, SCENE 2, LINE 173, ON PAGE ____. THE SPEECH THAT BEGINS, "IF YOU HAVE TEARS...."

(Read the passage through to line 182, "the blood of Caesar followed it.")

THE NERVII WERE A BELGIAN TRIBE THAT CAESAR HAD CONQUERED. WHY DOES ANTONY MENTION CAESAR'S VICTORY OVER THEM WHEN WHAT HE IS GOING TO TALK ABOUT IS THE WOUNDED BODY OF CAESAR?

(To appeal to the patriotism of the crowd.)

THE INTERESTING THING ABOUT THE REFERENCE IS THIS. IF YOU WERE TO DO A LITTLE RESEARCH, YOU WOULD LEARN ANTONY DID NOT JOIN CAESAR IN GAUL UNTIL THREE YEARS AFTER THE BATTLES WITH THE NERVII, AND ALSO THAT THE NERVII WERE DEFEATED IN THE WINTER, NOT THE SUMMER. IF WE ASSUME SHAKESPEARE KNEW THESE FACTS, THEN ANTONY IS SIMPLY FANTISIZING WHEN HE SAYS HE REMEMBERS THE FIRST TIME CAESAR PUT ON HIS CLOAK AND SO ON. BUT WHAT HE SAYS IS EFFECTIVE, SO FAR AS STIRRING UP THE CROWD'S EMOTIONS. OF COURSE, THERE WOULD BE VERY FEW PEOPLE IN THE MOB, OR SITTING IN A THEATRE, OR READING THE PLAY, WHO WOULD KNOW THAT ANTONY WAS LYING.

BUT HOW ABOUT THE REST OF THIS, WHERE ANTONY IS POINTING OUT EACH HOLE IN THE CLOAK MADE BY AN ASSASSIN'S DAGGER AND IDENTIFYING THE CONSPIRATOR WHO MADE IT? LOOK BACK TO ACT III, SCENE 1, LINE 25, PAGE ____, JUST BEFORE THE ASSASSINATION. CASSIUS SAYS, "TREBONIUS KNOWS HIS TIME FOR LOOK YOU, BRUTUS, HE DRAWS MARK ANTONY OUT OF THE WAY."

(Some editions of _Caesar_ will have a note at this point specifying that Antony exits. If there is such a note, read it.)

SO ANTONY IS LYING AGAIN HERE. THE CROWD DOES NOT KNOW IT, BUT THE ALERT READER OR SPECTATOR WILL REMEMBER THAT ANTONY WAS NOT A WITNESS TO THE ASSASSINATION, AND WILL RECOGNIZE ANTONY IS MAKING UP THIS FANTASY TO PLAY ON THE EMOTIONS OF THE CROWD. BUT WE ALSO KNOW THAT ANTONY'S GRIEF FOR CAESAR IS GENUINE: HIS MOTIVES FOR WHAT HE IS DOING ARE UNSELFISH AND WE CAN SYMPATHIZE WITH HIM.

Writing assignment

(7)

BEFORE WE GO ON, I WANT TO ASK YOU TO WRITE SOMETHING FOR ME, IN ABOUT FIVE MINUTES, SO THAT I CAN GET AN IDEA OF HOW WELL YOU ARE LEARNING TO READ THE SCENES WE ARE EXAMINING. FIRST, PUT AWAY YOUR COPIES OF CAESAR. I AM HANDING OUT A SHEET OF PAPER ON WHICH ARE A FEW LINES FROM THE END OF THE FUNERAL ORATION SCENE. YOU HAVE HEARD THE LINES BEFORE.

(The passage is to be printed separately since some editions of the play insert stage directions at the crucial point--e.g., "pulls aside the mantle covering Caesar's body"--and the exercise is intended to test whether the students are reading well enough to see that the uncovering of the corpse is a necessary action. It is demanded by Antony's "Look you here, Here is himself" and by the reactions of the citizens.

This exercise will give you a good check on the students' progress in learning to visualize.*

Give the students about five minutes to write. Collect the papers, read and discuss a few of them.

If a substantial number of students fail to see that Shakespeare has built the speech toward a climax that is visual, rather than verbal, some reviewing of points made in the first series of lessons should be done. By this time, however, most students should recognize and be able to describe the necessary actions in a scene such as this one.)

SO BY THE TIME WE HAVE READ THIS SCENE, WE KNOW SOMETHING MORE ABOUT WHAT SORT OF PERSON ANTONY IS. HE IS EXTREMELY CLEVER AND ABLE, AND HE WILL DO ANYTHING NECESSARY TO AVENGE CAESAR. BUT WE ALSO KNOW SOMETHING MORE ABOUT BRUTUS AND CASSIUS, DON'T WE. REMEMBER IN THE SCENE WE ACTED OUT EARLIER, BRUTUS BELIEVES EVERYTHING ANTONY SAYS. HE ALSO IS PERFECTLY WILLING TO LET ANTONY SPEAK TO THE MOB BECAUSE HE HAS NO IDEA OF HOW CLEVER AN ORATOR ANTONY CAN BE. BRUTUS IS SURE THAT ONCE HE HAS SPOKEN TO THE CROWD, THERE IS NOTHING ANTONY CAN DO AFTERWARDS TO CHANGE THE MIND OF THE MOB.

(To give the students, in passing, another and further insight into Antony's character and his motivations, you may wish to read at this point, without much comment, the first 29 lines of Act IV, Scene i--the conversation between Antony, Octavius, and Lepidus, down through Antony's "So is my horse, Octavius.")

CASSIUS, ON THE OTHER HAND, DOES UNDERSTAND HOW DANGEROUS ANTONY CAN BE, BUT CASSIUS MISTAKES ANTONY'S MOTIVES. ANTONY WANTS VENGEANCE: BUT CASSIUS THINKS HE WANTS POWER, AND TRIES TO BRIBE HIM WITH IT. ALTHOUGH CASSIUS FEARS ANTONY, HE CANNOT STAND UP TO BRUTUS, AND ALLOWS BRUTUS TO MAKE THE DECISIONS, EVEN THOUGH HE THINKS THEY ARE WRONG.

NOW KNOWING THESE THINGS ABOUT THE CHARACTERS WILL NATURALLY AFFECT THE WAY ONE READS OR REMEMBERS THE EARLIER SCENES INVOLVING THEM.

CITIZENS' PROMPT SCRIPT

(It can be assumed that Caesar's body already
lies on the apron of the stage in the center.)

BRUTUS. *(standing beside Caesar's body)*
Good countrymen, let me depart alone,
And, for my sake, stay here with Antony°
Do grace to Caesar's corpse, and grace his speech
Tending to Caesar's glories,° which Mark Antony,
By permission, is allowed to make.°
I do entreat you, not a man depart
Save I alone, till Antony have spoken....

° FOURTH CITIZEN (to his followers). Who wants to hear another speech?

° FIRST CITIZEN (to his followers). Glories? Ha!

° FOURTH CITIZEN (beginning to exit up a side aisle; to his followers). Let's go.

FIRST CITIZEN.
Stay, ho! And let us hear Mark Antony.

THIRD CITIZEN.
Let him go up into the public chair;
We'll hear him. Noble Antony, go up.

ANTONY (about to ascend). *(he has entered amongst the crowd; now he goes up onto the stage)*
For Brutus' sake, I am beholding to you.

FOURTH CITIZEN. *(moving back toward the stage)*
What does he say of Brutus?

THIRD CITIZEN. *(moving toward FOURTH CITIZEN)*
He says, for Brutus' sake,
He finds himself beholding to us all.

FOURTH CITIZEN.
'Twere best he speak no harm of Brutus here.

FIRST CITIZEN. *(moving toward THIRD and FOURTH CITIZENS)*
This Caesar was a tyrant.

THIRD CITIZEN. Nay, that's certain,
We are blest that Rome is rid of him.

SECOND CITIZEN.
Peace! let us hear what Antony can say.

ANTONY (now in the pulpit).
You gentle Romans...

CITIZENS.° Peace, ho! Let us hear him.

° (to be spoken only by SECOND CITIZEN and his followers; FIRST, THIRD, and FOURTH CITIZENS continue to ad lib their discontents with their respective followers. ANTONY should not have silence when he begins.)

ANTONY.
Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears!
I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.°

° (by now the crowd is paying full attention)

The evil that men do lives after them
The good is oft interred with their bones;
So let it be with Caesar.° The noble Brutus

° FIRST CITIZEN (to his followers). Yes, bury him and get it over with! SECOND CITIZEN (simultaneously, to his followers). He was a tyrant!

Hath told you Caesar was ambitious;
If it were so, it was a grievous fault,
And grievously hath Caesar answer'd it.°

° FIRST and SECOND CITIZENS (repeat above reactions)

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest--
For Brutus is an honorable man;°

° THIRD CITIZEN (to ANTONY). Long live Brutus! (then to his followers) He's talking about Brutus.

So are they all, all honorable men;
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral
He was my friend, faithful and just to me;
But Brutus says he was ambitious;
And Brutus is an honorable man.°

° THIRD CITIZEN (to his followers). Brutus is right. Caesar was ambitious.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill;

Did this in Caesar seem ambitious?°
When the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff:°
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious,
And Brutus is an honorable man.°
You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which thrice he did refuse. Was this ambition?°
Yet Brutus says he was ambitious;
And, sure, he is an honorable man.°
I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke,
But here I am to speak what I do know.
You all did love him once, not without cause;
What cause withholds you then to mourn for him?°
O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason. Bear with me;
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause till it come back to me.

FIRST CITIZEN.
Methinks there is much reason in his sayings.

SECOND CITIZEN.
If thou consider rightly of the matter,
Caesar has had great wrong.

THIRD CITIZEN.
Has he, masters?
I fear there will a worse come in his place.

° *FOURTH CITIZEN (to his followers). What ransoms? What did we get out of it?*

° *FIRST CITIZEN (nodding to his followers). He has a point.*

° *THIRD CITIZEN (to his followers). Marcus Brutus is our finest citizen. SECOND CITIZEN (simultaneously to his followers). Maybe Brutus was ambitious.*

° *SECOND CITIZEN (to ANTONY). No! Caesar was the people's friend.*

° *FOURTH CITIZEN (to his followers). Honorable? Did he treat Caesar honorably?*

° *(silence; the crowd is now totally with Antony and ashamed of its earlier sentiments.)*

(the following lines are to be spoken by the crowd leaders to their respective followers. The followers should respond in an undertone of affirmation so that the FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, and FOURTH CITIZENS' speeches can follow one another in rapid succession and at the same time seem to stand out from a multitude of reactions. This will be more realistic than having the majority of the crowd remain silent.)

FOURTH CITIZEN.
Marked ye his words? He would not take the crown;
Therefore 'tis certain he was not ambitious.

FIRST CITIZEN.
If it be found so, some will dear abide it.

SECOND CITIZEN.
Pour soul! His eyes are red as fire with weeping.

THIRD CITIZEN.
There's not a nobler man in Rome than Antony.

FOURTH CITIZEN.
Now mark him, he begins again to speak. *(the crowd becomes silent)*

ANTONY'S FUNERAL ORATION

Friends, Romans, Countrymen, lend me your ears:
I come to *bury* Caesar, not to *praise* him:
The *evil* that men do, *lives* after them,
The *good* is oft *interred* with their bones,
So let it be with Caesar.

The noble Brutus,
Hath told you Caesar was *ambitious*:
If it were so, it was a *grievous* fault,
And ***grievously*** hath Caesar answered it.

Here, under leave of Brutus and the rest
(For Brutus is an *honorable man*,
So are they *all; all honorable men*)
Come I to speak in Caesar's funeral.

He was my friend, faithful, and just to me;
But *Brutus* says, he was *ambitious*,
And *Brutus* is an *honorable* man.

He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms, did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Caesar seem *ambitious*?

When that the *poor* have *cried*, *Caesar* hath *wept*:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff,
Yet *Brutus* says, he was *ambitious*:
And *Brutus* is an *honorable* man.

You all did see, that on the Lupercal,
I thrice presented him a kingly crown,
Which *he* did *thrice* refuse.

Was this *ambition*?
Yet Brutus says, he was *ambitious*:
And sure he is an *honorable* man.

I *speak* not to disprove *what* Brutus *spoke*,
But here I am to *speak what* I do *know*;
You all did *love him once*, not without *cause*,
What *cause* withholds *you then*, to *mourn* for *him*?
O judgment! thou art fled to brutish beasts,
And men have lost their reason.

Bear with me,
My heart is in the coffin there with Caesar,
And I must pause, till it come back to me.

TEST

NAME ______________________________ PERIOD __________

The passage below comes near the end of Antony's funeral oration. Imagine yourself standing on the roof of a tall building overlooking the Forum. You can see everything in the square--Antony, the mob, Caesar's corpse--but you are too far away to hear what words are being spoken.

In the space below the quotation, or on the back of this sheet, write a description of what you would see from atop the building during the time that the lines below are being spoken.

- - - - - - - - - - - - -

ANTONY. Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through;
See what a rent the envious Casca made;
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabbed;
And as he plucked his cursed steel away,
Mark how the blood of Caesar followed it....

This was the most unkindest cut of all;
For when the noble Caesar saw him stab,
Ingratitude, more strong than traitor's arms,
Quite vanquished him: then burst his mighty heart;
And, in his mantle muffling up his face,...
great Caesar fell....

O, now you weep; and, I perceive, you feel
the dint of pity: these are gracious drops.
Kind souls, what, weep you when you but behold
Our Caesar's vesture[1] wounded? Look you here,
Here is himself, marred, as you see, with traitors.

FIRST CITIZEN. O piteous spectacle!

SECOND CITIZEN. O noble Caesar!

THIRD CITIZEN. O woeful day!

FIRST CITIZEN. O most bloody sight!

[1] Vesture means cloak or mantle.

THE CONFRONTATION: 2

LET US GO BACK NOW TO THE SCENE WHERE ANTONY CONFRONTS THE CONSPIRATORS, THE SCENE WE READ IN MODERN ENGLISH SEVERAL DAYS AGO. IT BEGINS AT LINE 122, ACT III, SCENE 1, PAGE_____. READ OVER THE SCENE IN THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE. USE THE NOTES YOU HAVE IN YOUR BOOKS, BUT DO NOT WORRY ABOUT UNDERSTANDING EVERY WORD OR EVEN EVERY SENTENCE. HOWEVER, WHEN YOU ARE PUZZLED, SEE IF YOU CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW THE SENTENCE WOULD BE READ ALOUD, AS WE FIGURED OUT THE FUNERAL ORATION.

Read the scene from the textbook

(While the class reads the scene through once to themselves, ask the same students who acted the speaking parts in the prose version of this scene--the servant, Antony, Cassius, and Brutus--to leave the room to rehearse the scene.

Cast same students

These four students should be given enough time to work through the scene until they can read it fairly fluently. If it is possible, they should be allowed to work with it overnight--or, alternatively, you might take the students aside some days before this point is reached, tell them what they will be asked to do, and give them several days to work it up. If it is possible to work with the actors before or after school, it will be time well spent.

If it happens that the students will have to be given a good deal of class time for rehearsal, the rest of the class may be asked to reread the prose paraphrase of the scene in addition to the Shakespearean version.

When the student actors are ready, call them back in, and ask the same students who played the conspirators earlier to take the same parts again. Act through the entire scene without interruption--lines 121-275, including Antony's "Cry Havoc" speech.

Act the scene

Allow discussion of the scene, especially about the effect of the earlier performance upon their understanding of the original.)

Discuss

BRUTUS AND LUCIUS

Summary of action

AFTER ANTONY'S SPEECH, THE ROMAN MOB REVOLTS AND DRIVES BRUTUS, CASSIUS AND THE OTHER CONSPIRATORS FROM ROME. MARK ANTONY, OCTAVIUS CAESAR--JULIUS CAESAR'S NEPHEW--AND A GENERAL NAMED LEPIDUS TAKE CONTROL OF THE GOVERNMENT AND EXECUTE THOSE LEADERS THEY THINK MIGHT BE DANGEROUS TO THEM. BRUTUS AND CASSIUS FLEE TOWARD GREECE, RAISING AN ARMY ON THE WAY. ANTONY AND OCTAVIUS PURSUE THEM.

AFTER BRUTUS AND CASSIUS HAVE FLED TO ASIA MINOR, CASSIUS COMES TO BRUTUS' TENT TO CONFER WITH HIM. BRUTUS IS IN A FOUL MOOD. HE ACCUSES CASSIUS OF ROBBING THE PEASANTS, OF SELLING OFFICES, AND OF CHEATING HIM. THEY HAVE A VIOLENT ARGUMENT, IN THE MIDST OF WHICH CASSIUS DISCOVERS THAT BRUTUS HAS JUST LEARNED THAT HIS WIFE, BACK IN ROME, HAS COMMITTED SUICIDE BY SWALLOWING FIRE. REALIZING THAT BRUTUS IS GRIEF-STRICKEN, CASSIUS FORGIVES HIM FOR HIS INSULTS, AND REFRAINS FROM ARGUING WITH HIM WHEN BRUTUS INSISTS THAT THEIR ARMIES SHOULD NOT WAIT, BUT MOVE TO ATTACK ANTONY AND OCTAVIUS. CASSIUS AGREES TO THIS STRATEGY EVEN THOUGH HE THINKS BRUTUS IS WRONG.

THE SCENE WE ARE GOING TO LOOK AT NEXT TAKES PLACE IMMEDIATELY AFTER CASSIUS AND BRUTUS HAVE BEEN RECONCILED AND MADE THEIR PLANS FOR THE FOLLOWING DAY. BRUTUS IS SAYING HIS GOODBYES TO CASSIUS AND THE OFFICERS OF THEIR ARMIES AS THE SCENE OPENS.

(Give the students copies of the scene in question, IV, iii, 229-275. A copy is used here, instead of the text in the students' edition, so that the scene can be discussed for itself before an abrupt change in mood is brought about by the entrance of Caesar's ghost; and also so the text may be used as the basis of small group conferences.

Hand out copies of scene (8)

Ask several students to read the various parts from their seats and go through the scene once.)

Read from seats

- -

BRUTUS. There is no more to say?

CASSIUS. No more. Good night:
Early to-morrow will we rise and hence.

BRUTUS. Lucius! (Re-enter LUCIUS.) My gown. (Exit LUCIUS.)
Farewell, good Messala:
Good night, Titinius: noble, noble Cassius,
Good night, and good repose.

CASSIUS. O my dear brother!
This was an ill beginning of the night:
Never come such division 'tween our souls!
Let it not, Brutus.

BRUTUS. Everything is well.

CASSIUS. Good night, my lord.

BRUTUS. Good night, good brother.

TITINIUS, MESSALA. Good night, Lord Brutus.

BRUTUS. Farewell, every one. (Exeunt all but BRUTUS.
Re-enter LUCIUS, with the gown.)
Give me the gown. Where is thy instrument?

LUCIUS. Here in the tent.

BRUTUS. What, thou speak'st drowsily?
Poor knave, I blame thee not; thou art o'er-watch'd.
Call Claudius and some other of my men;
I'll have them sleep on cushions in my tent.

LUCIUS. Varro and Claudius!

(Enter VARRO and CLAUDIUS.)

VARRO. Calls my lord?

BRUTUS. I pray you, sirs, lie in my tent and sleep;
It may be I shall raise you by and by
On business to my brother Cassius.

VARRO. So please you, we will stand and watch your pleasure.

BRUTUS. I will not have it so: lie down, good sirs;
It may be I shall otherwise bethink me.
Look, Lucius, here's the book I sought for so;
I put it in the pocket of my gown.

(VARRO and CLAUDIUS lie down.)

LUCIUS. I was sure your lordship did not give it me.

BRUTUS. Bear with me, good boy, I am much forgetful.
Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?

LUCIUS. Aye, my lord, an't please you.

BRUTUS. It does, my boy:
I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing.

LUCIUS. It is my duty, sir.

BRUTUS. I should not urge thy duty past thy might;
I know young bloods look for a time of rest.

LUCIUS. I have slept, my lord, already.

BRUTUS. It was well done; and thou shalt sleep again.
I will not hold thee long: if I do live,
I will be good to thee. (Music and a song.)
This is a sleepy tune. O murderous slumber,
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
That plays thee music? Gentle knave, good night;
I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee:
If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument;
I'll take it from thee; and, good boy, good night.
Let me see, let me see; is not the leaf turn'd down
Where I left reading? Here it is, I think. (Sits down.)

- - - - - - - - - -

(The only part of this scene that might need explication is Brutus'

"O murderous slumber,
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
That plays thee music?"

It can be explained that "slumber" is addressed as "murderous" since it was traditional to compare sleep to death and vice versa: e.g., sleep is "a little death."

The "leaden mace" refers to the practice in Shakespeare's time of officers of the law touching a person on the shoulder with a mace--or staff--to signify he was under arrest.

Brutus says that the boy was playing music to slumber because the boy was playing "a sleepy tune" that was supposed to help Brutus relax and go to sleep.)

ALL RIGHT, BEFORE WE DO ANYTHING ELSE, LET'S LOOK AT THE SCENE AGAIN AND MAKE SURE WE KNOW WHAT HAPPENS IN IT. AT THE BEGINNING, BRUTUS IS SAYING GOODBYE TO CASSIUS AND TWO OF THEIR GENERALS, TITINIUS AND MESSALA. BRUTUS ASKS LUCIUS TO GET HIM HIS GOWN. WHO IS LUCIUS?*

(Brutus' servant. A boy.)

HOW DO WE KNOW?

(From the cast of characters. From what he does. Because of what Brutus says to and about him.

Have the students find the pertinent lines, if necessary: "Bear with me, good boy," "It does, my boy," "Young bloods," etc. We know he is a servant, also, from what Brutus promises him, from the way Brutus treats him and from the way Lucius speaks and acts.)

Necessary actions

THEN LUCIUS RETURNS WITH BRUTUS' DRESSING GOWN, PROBABLY HELPS BRUTUS PUT IT ON--THOUGH THE SCRIPT DOESN'T SAY SO. BRUTUS THEN ASKS LUCIUS TO FIND HIS INSTRUMENT.

IT IS CLEAR FROM WHAT HAPPENS THAT "INSTRUMENT" MEANS "MUSICAL INSTRUMENT," ONE THAT WOULD BE USED TO ACCOMPANY SINGING, PROBABLY A SMALL, GUITAR-LIKE ELIZABETHAN INSTRUMENT CALLED A LUTE.

BEFORE LUCIUS CAN BEGIN TO PLAY, BRUTUS ASKS HIM TO CALL IN TWO OTHER SERVANTS, VARRO AND CLAUDIUS; WHEN THEY REPORT, BRUTUS ASKS THEM TO STAY IN THE TENT SO THAT THEY WILL BE ON THE SPOT IF HE HAS TO SEND A MESSENGER TO CASSIUS. VARRO SAYS THEY WILL "STAND AND WATCH YOUR PLEASURE"--THAT'S AN EXPRESSION WE STILL MIGHT HEAR TODAY: A WAITER IN A RESTAURANT MAY ASK, "WHAT IS YOUR PLEASURE?"

BUT BRUTUS TELLS THEM TO LIE DOWN AND GET SOME SLEEP: HE WILL WAKE THEM ONLY IF HE NEEDS THEM. BRUTUS THEN SHOWS LUCIUS A BOOK HE HAD THOUGHT HE HAD LOST, BUT HAD PUT IN THE POCKET OF HIS DRESSING GOWN. BRUTUS SETTLES DOWN AND ASKS LUCIUS TO PLAY HIM A TUNE. LUCIUS BEGINS TO PLAY AND SING. AND THEN WHAT HAPPENS?

(Lucius falls asleep.)

WHAT DOES BRUTUS DO THEN?

(Takes the instrument from Lucius so it won't be broken, begins to read his book.)

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MOOD OF THIS SCENE? IF YOU HAD TO FIND ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE IT, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Mood of the scene

(Any number of suggestions would be acceptable--quiet, peaceful, serene, gentle, or any term with a similar sort of meaning. Take student suggestions and then have them decide on one best term to describe the mood.)

WE CAN SAY, THEN THAT ONE THING THAT THIS SCENE DOES IS TO CONVEY A MOOD. LATER, I WANT TO ASK YOU WHY SHAKESPEARE MAY HAVE WANTED TO CONVEY A MOOD OF __________ AT JUST THIS POINT. BUT LET ME ASK ANOTHER QUESTION FIRST.

THE SCENE ALSO SHOWS US SOMETHING ABOUT BRUTUS, I THINK. WHAT DOES BRUTUS DO IN THE SCENE THAT WOULD TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT SORT OF PERSON HE IS?

Brutus' character

(Allow student suggestions of what the pertinent actions are, and of what they reveal. The most revealing actions, of course, are those in which Brutus shows kindness and consideration for his servants--asking Varro and Claudius to lie down and sleep, not waking Lucius, gently taking away his instrument. There are also, of course, his reading and his sleeplessness.

The danger you will have to guard against is that the students, remembering earlier unflattering revelations about Brutus, may try to read into this scene something sinister or ominous.

The matter of the complexity of Brutus' character--of which this scene reveals one facet--should be reserved until later.

Since the scene is straightforward in its depiction of one side of Brutus' character, the student who tries to torture out of it an interpretation in conformity with Brutus' earlier actions should simply be asked to justify his suggestions from the text itself, which he will not be able to do. In this way, the question of consistency of characterization can be put off till a more opportune time.)

SO THE SCENE DOES AT LEAST TWO THINGS. IT SETS A MOOD AND IT SHOWS US SOMETHING ABOUT BRUTUS. IF YOU WILL REMEMBER, I HAVE SAID SEVERAL TIMES, WHEN WE WERE TALKING ABOUT THE DRAMA, THAT THE ACTIONS IN A PLAY ARE SOMETIMES AS IMPORTANT AS THE DIALOGUE, AND MAYBE EVEN MORE IMPORTANT. I THINK THE PRESENT SCENE IS ONE OF THOSE CASES. AND I WANT US TO CONDUCT AN EXPERIMENT WITH THIS SCENE.

Actions may be important as dialogue

DOES ANYONE KNOW WHAT THE WORD "PANTOMIME" MEANS?

Pantomime introduced

(Write the word on the blackboard. If a student does not come up with a definition, define "pantomime" as a play in which the meaning is conveyed without words.)

I WANT US TO TRY TO PANTOMIME THIS SCENE, AND TO SEE WHETHER WE CANNOT CREAT THE MOOD OF __________ THAT WE AGREED WAS PRESENT, AND ALSO TELL THE AUDIENCE THOSE THINGS ABOUT BRUTUS THAT WE HAVE AGREED THE SCENE REVEALS. I THINK THAT WE WILL FIND THAT, IF WE ACT OUT ALL THE NECESSARY ACTIONS CALLED FOR BY THE DIALOGUE, AND INVENT A FEW APPROPRIATE INTERPRETIVE ACTIONS, THERE WILL BE VERY LITTLE LOST FROM THE SCENE WHEN WE ELIMINATE THE DIALOGUE.

Pantomime assigned to groups

I AM GOING TO ASK SEVERAL GROUPS TO GET TOGETHER TO WORK OUT A PANTOMIME PERFORMANCE OF THIS SCENE, BUT BEFORE I DO THAT, I WANT YOU TO RECORD FOR ME CERTAIN THINGS THAT YOU LEARN FROM READING THE SCENE.

YOU WILL NOTICE THAT THE SCRIPT I GAVE YOU HAS A COLUMN ON EACH SIDE OF THE TEXT. THE LEFTHAND ONE IS HEADED, "PROPS." A PROP OR PROPERTY IS ANYTHING ON STAGE BESIDES THE SCENERY ITSELF; ESPECIALLY A THING THAT IS USED BY AN ACTOR ON THE STAGE. A TABLE, A BOOK, A SWORD, A PENCIL, A TELEPHONE, A CUSHION, OR A WATER GLASS CAN BE A PROP.

Call attention to blank columns on scripts (8)

ALTHOUGH THIS IS A VERY SHORT SCENE, IT CALLS FOR A NUMBER OF PROPS. I WANT EACH OF YOU TO READ THE SCENE THROUGH ONCE AGAIN JUST TO DETERMINE WHAT PROPS ARE CALLED FOR BY THE DIALOGUE. EXCEPT IN THE CASES OF PROPS WHICH CHARACTERS MUST SIT OR LIE ON, I WILL WANT YOU TO PANTOMIME THE PROPS AS WELL. GO AHEAD AND MAKE YOUR PROP LIST NOW. WE WILL DISCUSS IT LATER.

Props

(Give the students a few minutes to make their lists of props. For this scene, the following props are needed:

a dressing gown
a lute
cushions (for Varro and Claudius)
a book

chairs or couches, for Brutus and
Lucius
perhaps a cover, for Brutus to put
over Lucius.

Continue...)

THE RIGHT HAND COLUMN IS HEADED, "NECESSARY ACTIONS." BEFORE YOU BEGIN WORK ON THIS COLUMN, GO BACK TO YOUR SCRIPT AND UNDERLINE EACH OF THE STAGE DIRECTIONS.

(This should take no more than a minute.)

WHEN YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED THE NECESSARY ACTIONS, CONSIDER POSSIBLE ACTIONS, AND PIECES OF BUSINESS THAT WOULD WITHER HELP TO ENHANCE THE MOOD OF THE SCENE OR HELP TO MAKE CLEARER WHAT SORT OF PERSON BRUTUS IS IN THIS SCENE. DO NOT WRITE THESE DOWN. JUST GO BACK OVER THE SCENE AND TRY TO VISUALIZE WHAT EACH CHARACTER MIGHT BE DOING.

(At this point, divide the class into three or four groups. Each group should have at least 8 or preferably 9 students in it. Try to distribute the most able students among the groups. Appoint one student in each group as the "director," another as the "prompter." It will be the prompter's responsibility to make a record of the whole group's final decisions about necessary and interpretive actions.

Each group is to discuss the scene, suggest and decide on business that will help to convey the meaning of the words, cast the various parts, rehearse the scene several times, revising the performance as the group thinks best. When a final agreement is reached the prompter will prepare a final prompt sheet for the group, noting the necessary actions and the most important interpretive actions his group has agreed on.

[You may tell the students that the prompt sheet prepared by each group will be read and graded, and that the grade will be given to each member of the group]

Before the groups are sent off to work, answer any questions they have about the assignment. Perhaps the one hint that will need to be dropped is that you think that Brutus has the opportunity to show a great deal of tenderness toward Lucius when he takes away the boy's lute and puts him to bed.

Again, as with earlier group work, it would be preferable to find separate rooms or areas for each group to rehearse in. If they work in the same room, they will not only disturb each other but also imitate business they observe being used in other group rehearsals.

The groups should be given as much time as they need for this preparation and rehearsal. As much as you can, leave the students on their own to work out the problems of presenting their pantomime. But suggest that a student in each group read the scene and directions aloud the first time or that two of the actors pantomime it.

Music

If you wish, you may ask one student in each group to be responsible for choosing a musical background that would contribute to the effectiveness of the scene. This student could take suggestions from the group and be responsible for bringing an appropriate recording to class the next day. Specify that any sort of music may be chosen as background. Even better than a recording, would be a live performance by a student who plays guitar or a recorder or suchlike instrument. This, of course, can be done only if rehearsals are to last until the end of the period.

When the student groups have had adequate time, call the class back together and watch the performance of each group.

Discussion

At the end of the series of performances, allow the students to discuss what they have seen. By this point, their discussion of the performances should need little guidance from you. Allow the discussion to continue as long as it seems productive, but do not intervene unless students begin to make personal criticisms of one another. In tryouts of these lessons, videotape recordings were made of the successive student performances. The tapes were played back and discussed, this procedure arousing considerable interest and enthusiasm.

As the students talk, take note of remarks bearing on the characterization of Brutus, and refer back to those remarks, or to the actions that inspired them, at appropriate places in the following section of the lesson.)

What does the scene do?

BY NOW YOU SHOULD KNOW THIS SCENE AS WELL AS ANYONE KNOWS IT. AND I WANT TO GET BACK TO THE QUESTION I RAISED EARLIER, OF WHY SHAKESPEARE WROTE THE SCENE AND WHY HE PLACED IT WHERE HE DID. IN OTHER WORDS, WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE SCENE, WHAT DOES IT DO? BEFORE WE DISCUSS THE QUESTION, THOUGH, LET ME POINT OUT TWO WAYS IN WHICH THE SCENE FUNCTIONS THAT YOU WOULD NOT BE AWARE OF NOW, UNLESS YOU HAD READ THE REST OF THE PLAY.

Summary of action

THE SCENE FOLLOWS IMMEDIATELY AFTER A HIGHLY DRAMATIC SCENE IN WHICH BRUTUS AND CASSIUS QUARREL AND EVEN THREATEN ONE ANOTHER'S LIVES, A SCENE IN WHICH THE

AUDIENCE FINDS OUT THAT BRUTUS' WIFE HAS KILLED HERSELF. IMMEDIATELY AFTER THIS SCENE, AS WE SHALL SEE, THERE IS A SERIES OF VERY TENSE CONFLICTS. SO WE MIGHT SAY THAT THIS SCENE, WITH ITS QUIET, PEACEFUL MOOD GIVES THE AUDIENCE A CHANCE TO CATCH ITS BREATH BETWEEN MOMENTS OF HIGH EXCITEMENT. PLAYWRIGHTS OFTEN DO THIS, PUT SLOW OR QUIET OR HUMOROUS SCENES IN THEIR PLAYS TO SEPARATE ONE HIGHLY DRAMATIC MOMENT FROM ANOTHER. THIS IS JUST SIMPLE PSYCHOLOGY, FOR A SERIES OF HIGHLY DRAMATIC SCENES, ONE AFTER ANOTHER, WILL WEAR OUT THE AUDIENCE. ON TOP OF THAT, A HIGHLY DRAMATIC MOMENT WILL SEEM EVEN MORE DRAMATIC IF IT CONTRASTS WITH A SCENE THAT IS LESS DRAMATIC. SO WE COULD SAY THAT ONE FUNCTION OF THE MOOD CREATED IN THIS SCENE IS TO RELIEVE THE TENSION BUILT UP IN THE PREVIOUS SCENE AND TO LET THE AUDIENCE SETTLE DOWN, SO THAT THE NEXT DRAMATIC ACTION WILL HAVE MORE OF AN IMPACT ON THEM, SINCE IT WILL CONTRAST WITH WHAT CAME BEFORE.

Breaks tension

AND THE SCENE HAD ANOTHER FUNCTION YOU WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE WITHOUT SEEING OR READING THE WHOLE PLAY UP TO THIS POINT. IT IS AN ECHO OF A SCENE EARLIER IN THE PLAY, BEFORE CAESAR IS MURDERED. LOOK AT THE VERY BEGINNING OF ACT II, SCENE 1, PAGE ____ IN YOUR BOOKS. THIS IS THE SAME SCENE WE READ PART OF EARLIER, IN WHICH BRUTUS ARGUES WITH HIMSELF ABOUT WHETHER TO JOIN THE CONSPIRACY. WOULD TWO OF YOU READ THIS SCENE THROUGH LINE FORTY, BUT SKIP OVER THE SOLILOQUY WE HAVE ALREADY ANALYZED.

Echoes earlier scene

(Have two students read the parts of Brutus and Lucius.)

HERE AGAIN IS THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE BOY, LUCIUS, WHO HAS NO WORRIES AND CAN SLEEP EASILY AND PEACEFULLY, AND BRUTUS, WHO IS BOTHERED BY GREAT DECISIONS AND CANNOT SLEEP. AND LOOK OVER AT LINE 61. "SINCE CASSIUS FIRST DID WHET ME AGAINST CAESAR, I HAVE NOT SLEPT." THAT MUST BE AN EXAGGERATION, SINCE A MONTH HAS PASSED SINCE CASSIUS FIRST SPOKE TO HIM, BUT THE MEANING IS CLEAR. WHAT THE AUDIENCE IS PROBABLY SUPPOSED TO NOTICE IS, FIRST, THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE GUILTY BRUTUS AND THE INNOCENT LUCIUS, AND, SECOND, THE FACT THAT BRUTUS IS IN THE SAME STATE AFTER HAVING KILLED CAESAR AS HE WAS IN BEFORE.

BUT TO GET BACK TO THE SCENE ITSELF. WHAT SORT OF MAN WAS THE BRUTUS YOU SAW IN THE SCENE AS IT WAS ACTED OUT BEFORE YOU? FOR THE MOMENT, FORGET THAT YOU KNOW ANYTHING ELSE ABOUT BRUTUS BUT WHAT IS IN THIS SCENE.

What sort of man is Brutus?

(The answers that should be reinforced are those that typify Brutus as kind and considerate and/or an intellectual.)

BUT WE DO KNOW THINGS ABOUT BRUTUS BESIDES WHAT WE LEARN IN THIS SCENE. WHAT OTHER THINGS DO WE KNOW ABOUT HIM?

What else is known about Brutus?

(By this point, the students know a good deal about Brutus. Try to get them to bring out the following things, but do not let them yet get too involved in trying to reconcile all the elements in Brutus' personality. It is better to lay out all the evidence first, before tackling that question.

1. Brutus is honored and respected by everyone--by the conspirators, by Caesar, and by the Roman citizenry.

2. Brutus is capable of self-righteousness and self-deception. [The soliloquy]

3. Although noble, Brutus is gullible, an innocent in practical matters. Cassius and the conspirators use him for their own purposes. Brutus is capable of generosity, even at times of stress: he allows Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral and deters the other conspirators from doing him harm. But this generosity ironically emphasizes that Brutus is gullible.

4. Brutus is completely confident in his own judgment--about Antony, for instance, and about the tactics for the battle--and his confidence is unshaken by the fact he has been proven wrong about Antony. He still insists on imposing his judgment on Cassius and others.

5. Brutus has betrayed and murdered Caesar.

6. Through his own blunders, Brutus has lost both his own place in Rome and the freedom for Rome for which he killed Caesar. He has turned Rome over to Antony and Octavius.)

ALL RIGHT. SHAKESPEARE HAS LET US KNOW ALL THESE THINGS ABOUT BRUTUS. MOST THINGS THAT WE HAVE SEEN BRUTUS DO UP TO THIS POINT IN THE PLAY HAVE BEEN FOOLISH OR CHILDISH OR TREASONOUS.

(Exceptions would be found in his treatment of Antony and Antony's servant. And in the scene with Portia, which has not been discussed.)

BUT STILL EVERYONE HAS TALKED THROUGHOUT THE PLAY ABOUT WHAT A NOBLE AND BELOVED MAN BRUTUS IS. HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE BRUTUS YOU SAW IN THE SCENE WE JUST ACTED?

(If the points about Brutus' gentleness and consideration have been well made, the students should agree that they could like and respect such a man. The following points may either be made by you or drawn out of the students.)

The function of the scene: What Brutus was

THEN PERHAPS WE CAN SAY THAT THIS SCENE GIVES US A GLIMPSE OF WHAT BRUTUS WAS LIKE BEFORE THE PLAY OPENED: KIND AND GENTLE EVEN WITH HIS SERVANTS, A READER, A MAN OF PEACE. SO THE SCENE HELPS US UNDERSTAND WHY BRUTUS WAS RESPECTED SO HIGHLY BY EVERYONE. IT ALSO MAKES US REALIZE HOW GREAT A MISTAKE BRUTUS MADE IN BECOMING INVOLVED IN AN ENTERPRISE FOR WHICH HE WAS COMPLETELY UNSUITED. THE TURNED-DOWN LEAF IN THE BOOK THAT BRUTUS BEGINS TO READ, MAY SUGGEST BRUTUS IS TRYING TO REGAIN SOMETHING OF WHAT HE HAD BEFORE, THAT HE WANTS TO RECOVER THE PEACEFULNESS OF HIS EARLIER LIFE FOR AT LEAST A WHILE BEFORE THE BATTLE, IN WHICH HE KNOWS HE MAY DIE.

Synthesis

AND WHEN WE BEGIN TO THINK ABOUT THE OTHER SCENES IN WHICH WE HAVE SEEN BRUTUS, AND WE REALIZE THAT NORMALLY BRUTUS WAS KIND, QUIET, AND PEACEFUL, WE BEGIN TO SEE OTHER THINGS--HOW IRONIC IT IS THAT BRUTUS SHOULD BE COMMANDING AN ARMY IN A BATTLE THAT WILL DECIDE WHO RULES THE WORLD, HOW TRAGIC IT IS FOR A GOOD MAN LIKE BRUTUS TO HAVE BECOME A

TRAITOR AND A MURDERER, HOW HELPLESS A NOBLE AND IDEALISTIC MAN LIKE BRUTUS MAY BE WHEN CONFRONTED BY EVIL AND AMBITION.

IT ALSO MAKES US REALIZE HOW FOOLISH CASSIUS HAS BEEN TO ALLOW BRUTUS TO TAKE OVER THE CONSPIRACY AND MAKE DECISIONS THAT CASSIUS--A POLITICIAN AND A SOLDIER--KNOWS ARE WRONG.

MAYBE IT EVEN MAKES US UNDERSTAND WHY CAESAR WAS SO DISMAYED AT FINDING BRUTUS AMONG THE CONSPIRATORS THAT HE STOPPED FIGHTING AND ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE KILLED.

SO WHAT LOOKS AT FIRST LIKE INCONSISTENCY--THE BRUTUS IN THIS SCENE IS NOT THE RUTHLESS BRUTUS WE HAVE MET EARLIER IN THE PLAY--IS ACTUALLY THE COMPLETION OF BRUTUS' CHARACTER. ONLY NOW, AFTER THIS SCENE, DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE BRUTUS EVERYONE LOOKED UP TO; ONLY NOW DO WE REALIZE HOW FINE A MAN HAS BEEN RUINED; AND ONLY NOW DO WE FULLY UNDERSTAND IT WAS INEVITABLE THAT THE CONSPIRATORS SHOULD FAIL.

Props | Text | Necessary Actions

BRUTUS. What, thou speak'st drowsily?
Poor knave, I blame thee not; thou art o'er-watch'd.
Call Claudius and some other of my men;
I'll have them sleep on cushions in my tent.

LUCIUS. Varro and Claudius!

(Enter VARRO and CLAUDIUS.)

VARRO. Calls my lord?

BRUTUS. I pray you, sirs, lie in my tent and sleep;
It may be I shall raise you by and by
On business to my brother Cassius.

VARRO. So please you, we will stand and watch your pleasure.

BRUTUS. I will not have it so: lie down, good sirs;
It may be I shall otherwise bethink me.
Look, Lucius, here's the book I sought for so;
I put it in the pocket of my gown.

(VARRO and CLAUDIUS lie down.)

LUCIUS. I was sure your lordship did not give it me.

BRUTUS. Bear with me, good boy, I am much forgetful.
Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?

LUCIUS. Aye, my lord, an't please you.

Props

Text

Necessary Actions

BRUTUS. What, thou speak'st drowsily?
Poor knave, I blame thee not; thou art o'er-watch'd.
Call Claudius and some other of my men;
I'll have them sleep on cushions in my tent.

LUCIUS. Varro and Claudius!

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(VARRO and CLAUDIUS lie down.)

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Canst thou hold up thy heavy eyes awhile,
And touch thy instrument a strain or two?

LUCIUS. Aye, my lord, an't please you.

Props   Text   Necessary Actions

BRUTUS. It does, my boy:
I trouble thee too much, but thou art willing.

LUCIUS. It is my duty, sir.

BRUTUS. I should not urge thy duty past thy might;
I know young bloods look for a time of rest.

LUCIUS. I have slept, my lord, already.

BRUTUS. It was well done; and thou shalt sleep again.
I will not hold thee long: if I do live,
I will be good to thee. (Music and a song.)
This is a sleepy tune. O murderous slumber,
Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy,
That plays thee music? Gentle knave, good night;
I will not do thee so much wrong to wake thee:
If thou dost nod, thou break'st thy instrument;
I'll take it from thee; and, good boy, good night.
Let me see, let me see; is not the leaf turn'd down
Where I left reading? Here it is, I think. (Sits down.)

BRUTUS AND THE GHOST

I HAVE ALREADY SAID THAT THE SCENE WAS PRECEDED BY A HIGHLY DRAMATIC QUARREL. LET US SEE WHAT FOLLOWS IT. TAKE OUT YOUR COPIES OF JULIUS CAESAR AND FIND THIS SCENE. RIGHT AT THE END OF ACT IV, PAGE____, BRUTUS SETTLES HIMSELF DOWN TO READ AFTER HE HAS PUT LUCIUS TO BED. "LET ME SEE, LET ME SEE; IS NOT THE LEAF TURNED DOWN WHERE I LEFT READING? HERE IT IS, I THINK." AND HE BEGINS TO READ. EVERYTHING IS STILL; LUCIUS, VARRO, AND CLAUDIUS ARE SLEEPING. THEN THE CANDLE BY WHICH BRUTUS IS READING BEGINS TO FLICKER. "HOW ILL THIS TAPER BURNS," SAYS BRUTUS, AND LIFTS HIS EYES FROM THE BOOK. THEN: "THE GHOST OF CAESAR ENTERS." BRUTUS SEES IT.

The ghost enters

"HA! WHO COMES HERE? I THINK IT IS THE WEAKNESS OF MINE EYES THAT SHAPES THIS MONSTROUS APPARATION.--IT COMES UPON ME!" LET'S READ THROUGH THE REST OF THE SCENE.

(Assign parts--Brutus, the ghost, Lucius, Varro, Claudius--and have the students read through the scene at their seats.)

FIRST QUESTION: THE GHOST NEVER SAYS WHO HE IS. HOW WOULD AN AUDIENCE KNOW IT IS CAESAR'S GHOST?

(Same actor and costume, or, if the ghost is unseen, the same voice.)

Mood: Contrast

WOULD SOMEONE COMPARE THE MOOD OF THE SCENE WE'VE JUST READ WITH THE ONE WE READ EARLIER?

(Student answers should emphasize the abrupt change--from tranquillity and static stage positions to excitement and rapid movement.)

SO, ASIDE FROM WHAT THE CONTRAST MAY TELL US ABOUT BRUTUS, THE ENTRANCE OF THE GHOST AND BRUTUS' REACTION TO IT IS DRAMATICALLY EFFECTIVE BECAUSE IT SO ABRUPTLY FOLLOWS THE PEACE AND QUIET OF THE EARLIER SCENE. AND BRUTUS' LEAPING UP AND RUSHING FROM ONE SLEEPING CHARACTER TO ANOTHER IS MORE STRIKING IN CONTRAST TO HIS QUIET, RELAXED BEHAVIOR IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE GHOST ENTERS.

(If a student raises the question, or if you think it should be mentioned, the question of the reality of the ghost can be rather quickly dismissed. The ghost would look or sound the same to the audience whether the director thought of it as a real ghost or a figment of Brutus' imagination. Actually, the question is important mainly to Brutus himself, and Brutus does not seem sure whether he really saw the ghost. While the imaginary nature of the ghost could be made clear by having Brutus doze off before the ghost enters accompanied by "dream music," nothing calls for such an interpretation. Dramatically, the question of whether there really are such things as ghosts is unimportant, although it might be noted that those members of the Elizabethan audience who really believed in ghosts probably would react more strongly than a modern person who merely accepts spirits as a dramatic convention.)

I'VE SAID BRUTUS LEAPS UP AND RUSHES ABOUT. WHAT EXACTLY DOES HE DO AND SAY THOUGH?

Brutus' reaction

(Brutus wakes Lucius, and then the others, and tells them that they had cried out in their sleep. Then he sends Varro and Claudius to Cassius with orders to assemble his army and start out at once.)

SO HERE IS THE BRUTUS WHO WE HAVE JUST SEEN BEING SO CONSIDERATE OF HIS SERVANTS SUDDENLY RUDELY WAKING THEM AND FALSELY ACCUSING THEM OF HAVING CRIED OUT, AS IF THEY WERE HAVING NIGHTMARES.

WHAT DOES IT SUGGEST ABOUT BRUTUS' STATE OF MIND THAT HE ACTS LIKE THIS?

(He is near panic. He is unsure whether the ghost was real--frightening enough in itself--a sign that the tension is affecting his sanity. He first speaks as if he assumes it were real--"Ill spirit, I would hold more talk with thee"--but then wants to find out if anyone else saw the ghost, indicating the possibility he thinks he imagined it.)

WHY DOES HE GIVE ORDERS FOR THE ARMIES TO MUSTER AT ONCE, EVEN THOUGH IT'S THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?

Brutus' state of mind

(He cannot stand the tension any longer. Now he knows he cannot sleep and he cannot face the prospect of waiting alone for morning. He wants to get it all over with, one way or the other.)

DO YOU THINK A PROFESSIONAL SOLDIER, OR A GOOD ONE EVEN, WOULD GIVE AN ORDER FOR SUCH A REASON?

(Not likely.)

BY THIS POINT, WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN WHEN BRUTUS AND CASSIUS GO INTO BATTLE AGAINST ANTONY AND OCTAVIUS?

(Everything indicates Brutus is headed for disaster. Ask the students to supply evidence for whatever predictions they make.)

ALL RIGHT, NOW THAT WE KNOW HOW THE FOURTH ACT ENDS, LET US GO BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SCENE, WHERE CASSIUS IS JUST LEAVING BRUTUS' TENT, AND ASK OURSELVES WHETHER, NOW THAT WE KNOW THE ENDING, WE WOULD DO ANYTHING DIFFERENTLY IN ACTING THE FIRST PART OF THE SCENE. IS THERE ANYTHING ABOUT THE EARLIER PART THAT WE WOULD WANT TO EMPHASIZE MORE, SO AS TO MAKE MORE DRAMATIC THE GHOST'S ENTRANCE AND BRUTUS' REACTION TO IT?

Back to the beginning of the episode

(Let the students discuss this matter with a minimum of guidance.

Then consider the matter of the entrance of the ghost. The following questions should be raised if the students do not raise them.

How long should Brutus sit, peacefully reading, before the ghost enters? How should the ghost enter?

How should the ghost enter?

Should Brutus see the ghost as soon as it comes on stage, or should the audience be aware of the apparition, standing over Brutus, for some time before Brutus becomes aware of it?

How should the ghost be represented, for maximum effectiveness? E.g., Caesar in his bloody cloak? Caesar as he was at the start of the play? A foggy, cloudy figure? A spot of light with an offstage voice? Nothing at all?

There are no right answers to questions such as these. They are simply to direct the students' attention to the range of choices of dramatic effects available to someone staging this scene--or reading it imaginatively.

If the earlier performances were accompanied by music, ask for suggestions about what change in the music would make the ghost's appearance and the following actions more effective. Establish the point--or points--at which the new music would be cued in.

Cast student actors

After the discussion, cast the scene with volunteers from among those who did not act in the earlier performances. Lucius may well be played by a girl. This time, the pantomime is to be supplemented by the dialogue.

If it can be arranged, make the assignment of parts near the end of a period, so that there will be some time for general discussion of the necessary actions and business in the latter part of the scene, but so that the actual performance can be put off until the next day, giving students a chance to procure recordings of appropriate music and the actors time to think about the parts.

Act the whole episode

At the beginning of the next class period, give the students time to arrange an acting area and to get the music ready, and to allow the actors time for last minute discussion.

Discussion

Play the scene straight through, and allow the students to discuss the performance, asking them how--and how well--the actors conveyed to them the meanings that they had agreed were present in the scene.)

CONCLUSION

THE NEXT ACT IS MOSTLY CONCERNED WITH THE BATTLE. AT BRUTUS' INSISTENCE, HIS ARMY AND CASSIUS' ARMY LEAVE THE HIGH GROUND, WHERE THEY HAVE THE ADVANTAGE, AND GO DOWN TO ATTACK ANTONY AND OCTAVIUS ON THE PLAINS.

Summary of the action (Act V)

THE ACT IS COMPLICATED, WITH A GREAT DEAL OF COMING AND GOING AND SEVERAL NEW CHARACTERS. WE WON'T WORRY ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THE BATTLE YET. IT WILL BE ENOUGH TO TELL YOU THAT, IN THE CONFUSION, BOTH CASSIUS AND BRUTUS COME TO BELIEVE THEY HAVE LOST THE BATTLE AND BOTH KILL THEMSELVES TO AVOID BEING CAPTURED AND HUMILIATED BY ANTONY. TURN TO THE VERY LAST PAGE OF THE PLAY, PAGE ____, AND LOOK AT ANTONY'S LAST SPEECH. ANTONY AND OCTAVIUS HAVE WON THE BATTLE, AND THEY HAVE JUST DISCOVERED BRUTUS' BODY. THE AUDIENCE WILL PROBABLY RECALL EARLIER HAVING SEEN BRUTUS STANDING OVER CAESAR'S BODY IN THE SAME WAY, AND ANTONY STANDING OVER CAESAR'S BODY AND PROPHESYING CAESAR WOULD BE AVENGED. A DIRECTOR MIGHT EVEN CHOOSE TO ARRANGE HIS ACTORS IN THE SAME THEY WERE DURING THE EARLIER SCENE TO MAKE THE

PARALLELISM UNMISTAKABLE. "THIS WAS THE NOBLEST ROMAN OF THEM ALL: ALL THE CONSPIRATORS SAVE ONLY HE DID THAT THEY DID IN ENVY OF GREAT CAESAR: HE ONLY, IN A GENERAL HONEST THOUGHT AND COMMON GOOD TO ALL, MADE ONE WITH THEM. HIS LIFE WAS GENTLE, AND THE ELEMENTS SO MIXED IN HIM THAT NATURE MIGHT STAND UP AND SAY TO ALL THE WORLD 'THIS WAS A MAN.'"

I THINK WE WOULD BE SAFE IN ASSUMING THAT SHAKESPEARE MEANT US TO HAVE THE SAME OPINION OF BRUTUS THAT ANTONY HAS. BUT LOOK A LITTLE MORE CLOSELY AT THE SPEECH. THIS SPEECH IS USUALLY TAKEN AS A TRIBUTE TO BRUTUS--EVEN HIS WORST ENEMY MUST PRAISE HIS NOBILITY. BUT REMEMBER BRUTUS EARLIER STANDING OVER CAESAR'S CORPSE AND PRAISING HIM. AND REMEMBER THIS IS ANTONY TALKING. EVEN THE FIRST LINE IS AMBIGUOUS. "THIS WAS THE NOBLEST ROMAN OF THEM ALL." WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? NOBLEST OF ALL THE ROMANS? OR JUST THE NOBLEST OF ALL THE CONSPIRATORS? "HIS LIFE WAS GENTLE"--EXCEPT FOR THAT ONE MISTAKE WITH A KNIFE-- "AND THE ELEMENTS SO MIXED IN HIM THAT NATURE MIGHT STAND UP AND SAY TO ALL THE WORLD 'THIS WAS A MAN.'" THIS IS PRAISE, UNDOUBTEDLY. BUT MAY IT NOT BE A HINT OF SOMETHING ELSE? FROM WHAT WE HAVE SEEN OF ANTONY IN ACTION, HOW HIGH DO YOU THINK ANTONY'S OPINION OF HUMANITY IS?

(Not very high.)

WE HAVE CERTAINLY SEEN HOW MIXED ARE THE ELEMENTS IN BRUTUS--NOBILITY AND GULLIBILITY, GENTLENESS AND

HOMICIDE, INTELLIGENCE AND PRACTICAL INCOMPETENCE. ISN'T IT POSSIBLE THAT ANTONY'S WORDS CAN ALSO SUGGEST TO US THAT BRUTUS WAS A MAN, NOT BECAUSE OF HIS NOBILITY AND STRENGTH OF CHARACTER, BUT BECAUSE OF THE PECULIARLY HUMAN COMBINATION OF GOOD AND BAD, STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS WE HAVE SEEN IN HIM?

"THIS WAS A MAN": A HIGH COMPLIMENT. "THIS WAS A MAN": A RATHER CYNICAL PHILOSOPHICAL OBSERVATION.

AND OCTAVIUS CLOSES THE PLAY. LISTEN TO THIS. "ACCORDING TO HIS VIRTUE LET US USE HIM WITH ALL RESPECT AND RITES OF BURIAL"--REMEMBER BRUTUS HIMSELF SAYING "CAESAR SHALL HAVE ALL TRUE RITES AND LAWFUL CEREMONIES":--"WITHIN MY TENT HIS BONES TONIGHT SHALL LIE, MOST LIKE A SOLDIER, ORDERED HONORABLY." (FOR BRUTUS IS AN HONORABLE MAN, REMEMBER.) "SO CALL THE FIELD TO REST; AND LET'S AWAY, TO PART THE GLORIES OF THIS HAPPY DAY." REMEMBER CASSIUS OFFERING ANTONY A SHARE OF CAESAR'S POWER. "YOUR VOICE SHALL BE AS STRONG AS ANY MAN'S IN THE DISPOSING OF NEW DIGNITIES." CASSIUS, UNCONSCIOUSLY, WAS AN ACCURATE PROPHET.

EVERYTHING COMES TOGETHER IN THESE LAST TWO SPEECHES; EVERYTHING IS TIED UP AND ENDED.

(Our suggestion is that at this point the students see the play--on stage or in a movie--or at least hear a record of it. It is our opinion that nothing else would be necessary with most classes, but an abler class might be assigned the reading of the play at this point. A good indication, by the way, of the effectiveness of the lessons would be whether any students have read all the play or parts of it not covered in these lessons. If even a few have read the book without its being explicitly assigned, it would be highly unusual.

Two final examinations are appended to this lesson. The first is a short answer test of the students' ability to visualize a scene and to interpret it. The skills called for by this examination are those that have been emphasized in the lessons.

The second test is an objective examination covering the whole play, not only those parts of it covered in these lessons.

We suggest it would be interesting to give both these examinations to classes which have studied these lessons and to classes which have read and studied the entire play in the conventional read-discuss-write manner.

We would expect the students who have studied the present lessons to demonstrate a much fuller understanding of the scene used in the short answer test. If they do, and if they also perform as well as the other students on the objective test, the advantages of the approach taken in these lessons will be obvious. Suggestions for evaluating the tests may be found in the appendix.*)

NAME ______________________________

Test: JULIUS CAESAR

So far, we have not said much about Julius Caesar himself in discussing the play named after him. The speech below is by Caesar and is one of the most famous in that play. The speech is made in the second scene of the first act. Caesar and his attendants enter, interrupting the conversation between Cassius and Brutus. Caesar is returning from a ceremony in which he had been offered, and refused, a symbolic crown by the people of Rome. Caesar notices Cassius and Brutus, pauses, makes the following remarks to Antony, and then moves off stage, whereupon Cassius continues his attempt to enlist Brutus in the conspiracy.

Read this speech several times, trying to hear the words and to picture the characters involved. Then write brief answers to the questions that follow the passage.

(CAESAR *has now reached the center of the square.*
Observing CASSIUS *at the far side where he stands*
with BRUTUS, *he stops.)*

CAESAR.
  Antonius!
ANTONY.
  Caesar?
CAESAR.
  Let me have men about me that are fat;
  Sleek-headed men and such as sleep o'nights:
  Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look;
  He thinks too much: such men are dangerous.
ANTONY.
  Fear him not, Caesar; he's not dangerous;
  He is a noble Roman and well given.
CAESAR.
  Would he were fatter! But I fear him not:
  Yet if my name were liable to fear,
  I do not know the man I should avoid
  So soon as that spare Cassius. He reads much;
  He is a great observer and he looks
  Quite through the deeds of men; he loves no plays,
  As thou dost, Antony; he hears no music;
  Seldom he smiles, and smiles in such a sort
  As if he mocked himself and scorned his spirit
  That could be moved to smile at anything.
  Such men as he be never at heart's ease
  Whiles they behold a greater than themselves,
  And therefore are they very dangerous.
  I rather tell thee what is to be feared
  Than what I fear; for always I am Caesar.
  Come on my right hand, for this ear is deaf,
  And tell me truly what thou think'st of him.

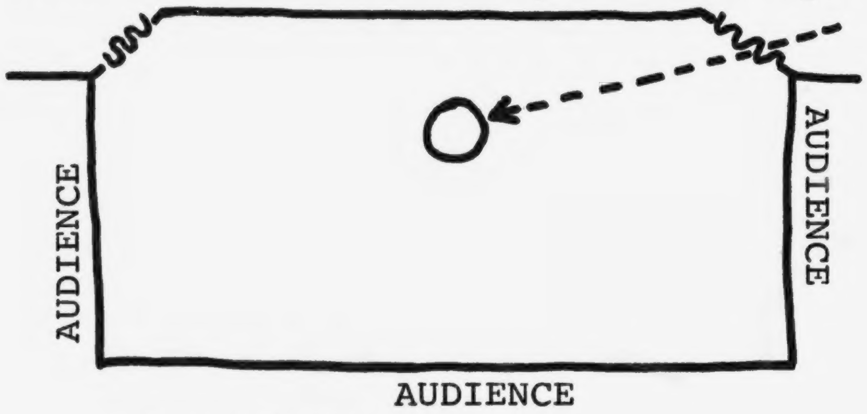
(Trumpets sound. CAESAR *and his train move on.)*

NAME ______________________________

Questions

I. Action. There is little physical movement in this episode, but what there is may contribute to an understanding of the speech.

A. In the stage diagram below, Caesar is indicated by a circle; his entrance is indicated by a dotted line. Using the symbols below the diagram, indicate where Cassius, Brutus, Antony and four of Caesar's attendants would be positioned at the start of the speech. Draw an arrow from each symbol to indicate which direction each character is facing. For example: B→



A = Antony

B = Brutus

C = Cassius

☐ = an attendant

B. Do Cassius and Brutus hear what Caesar says?

C. What do Cassius and Brutus do while Caesar is speaking to Antony?

D. Describe Caesar's posture and his tone of voice during this scene.

II. Character. What do we learn from this episode about each of the following characters? Briefly explain two things we learn about Caesar, and one thing we learn about each of the others.

A. Caesar
B. Cassius
C. Antony
D. Brutus

III. What is there about Caesar's speech that has made it famous and much-quoted?

NAME ______________________________ (10)

JULIUS CAESAR: TEST

Part I. Mark a T in the space in front of true statements, an F in front of false statements. (35 points)

______ 1. The ancestors of Brutus had driven the Tarquin kings from Rome.

______ 2. In the play, Caesar is young and strong.

______ 3. Caesar trusted Brutus and was his friend.

______ 4. Cassius wanted to enlist Cicero in the conspiracy, but Brutus advised against it.

______ 5. Brutus wanted to kill Antony as well as Caesar.

______ 6. Calpurnia warned Caesar against going to the Senate.

______ 7. Cassius and Brutus watched Antony offer Caesar the crown.

______ 8. The conspirators fled immediately after killing Caesar.

______ 9. The Roman citizens rioted as soon as they heard of Caesar's assassination.

______ 10. Antony read Caesar's will to the crowd at Caesar's funeral.

______ 11. Cicero was among those eliminated by the conspirators.

______ 12. The final battle between Brutus' and Antony's armies was fought at Sardis.

______ 13. Both Cassius and Brutus committed suicide.

______ 14. Brutus spoke before Antony at Caesar's funeral.

______ 15. Portia warned her husband not to go to the Senate on the day of the assassination because she dreamed she had seen him dead.

______ 16. Antony ruthlessly kills his opponents when he takes power.

______ 17. Portia committed suicide by drowning herself.

______ 18. Antony was surprised when his funeral oration roused the mob to violence and murder.

______ 19. The poet Cinna was the only conspirator who was actually lynched by the mob.

______ 20. We never learn what happened to the other conspirators, besides Brutus and Cassius.

JULIUS CAESAR: TEST (cont'd)

______ 21. The people were happy that Caesar refused the crown Antony offered him.

______ 22. Caesar was suspicious of Cassius.

______ 23. Brutus wanted to make himself king.

______ 24. Brutus' primary reason for killing Caesar was his love of the Roman Republic.

______ 25. Letters were thrown in Brutus' window to frighten him away from joining the conspiracy.

______ 26. Brutus refused to take an oath of loyalty to the conspirators because he believed the word of an honorable man was oath enough.

______ 27. There was a storm of intense violence on the night the conspirators came to Brutus' house.

______ 28. Lepidus was one of the conspirators.

______ 29. Octavius was Caesar's grandson.

______ 30. Brutus was usually considerate of his servants.

______ 31. Cassius and Brutus quarreled because Cassius wanted to surrender to Antony.

______ 32. Caesar was assassinated in the Forum.

______ 33. Antony was friendly to the conspirators after the assassination because he would follow whoever was in power.

______ 34. Brutus was not as good a judge of men as Cassius was.

______ 35. The play takes place in the Fifth Century B.C.

JULIUS CAESAR: TEST (cont'd)

Part II. In the space before each of the following speeches, write the name of the character who spoke it. (20 points)

________________ 36. "Et tu, Brute!"

________________ 37. "This was the most unkindest cut of all."

________________ 38. "Cowards die many times before their death; the valiant never taste of death but once."

________________ 39. "Thou shalt see me at Philippi."

________________ 40. "Beware the Ides of March."

________________ 41. "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune."

________________ 42. "Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world like a colossus, and we petty men walk under his huge legs and peep about to find ourselves dishonorable graves."

________________ 43. "It was Greek to me."

________________ 44. "Let me have men about me that are fat: sleek-headed men and such as sleep o'nights. Yond Cassius has a lean and hungry look. He thinks too much; such men are dangerous."

________________ 45. "This was the noblest Roman of them all."

NOTES AND APPENDICES

Preliminaries

* *p. 1 , I would like to review.* If the students have not studied the first Introduction to Theatre lessons some of the terms and concepts will be unfamiliar to them. It is suggested that at least the fourth lesson ("Conflict") from the first unit be gone through, and that such terms as necessary action and interpretive action be defined before the following lessons are undertaken.

Bruce's Dilemma

* *p. 3 , hand out "Bruce's Dilemma."* In spite of our attempts later in the lesson to steer students away from the moral issues involved in this situation, a few teachers who tried earlier versions of this lesson said the situation was "too close to home," and they were fearful that the discussion would get sidetracked to the subject of cheating. We believe the "closeness to home" is a positive feature, but for those who would like to use the basic idea of Bruce's Dilemma and yet establish some "distance" in the situation we offer the following alternative which was forwarded to us by a teacher in New Orleans.

Bruce's Dilemma

Mr. King is the head coach of a college football team. Although he's very popular with some of the boys, he has a reputation for being tough with others, showing partiality, and acting on personal whims.

The team has the chance to be first in the country. Some team members are convinced that Mr. King doesn't want certain first string players to take part in the upcoming special game which will be televised on a national network, because he doesn't want them to have any part of the limelight. It's general knowledge that he has a personal grudge against them.

To prevent these individuals from playing in Saturday's game, Mr. King has intentionally "forgotten" to include their names on a required list which must be mailed in prior to the game.

The news of this list and its omissions has leaked out. The players whose names have been omitted get together under the leadership of Cass, the halfback, and decide that, since they are being treated unfairly they have a right to defend themselves. Someone suggests they should get this list before it's mailed and substitute a new one including all the team members' names. Thus, Mr. King won't have an excuse for not using some of his best players in the game and will be forced to let them play. To do this means getting the help of someone who has access to Mr. King's locked desk and can handle the change.

There are only two students who, because they are doing office work for Mr. King, have access to the desk. One of the students, Andy, cannot be approached because he is Mr. King's favorite and would immediately report the players to Mr. King. The other student, Bruce, is the top student at the college and the quarterback of the football team. Bruce has no personal reason for wanting to change the list beforehand--his name is included.

The football players decide that they will try to persuade Bruce to join their conspiracy, since they feel sure that even if he will not help them, he will not report them.

Assume that the conspirators know that the following things are true of Bruce. His two most important motivations are to maintain the prestige of the school and to do whatever he can to help improve school spirit and the school's reputation. Bruce wants the team to win this big game. Bruce is also the sort of person who thinks it is very important to be popular with the "right" students and does not like to make anyone unhappy with him. (He has seen students cheating on tests and has not told on them.) Also, although Bruce likes and respects Mr. King, he has been heard to say that he believes Mr. King is out to hurt the career of certain players, even though there's a possibility of losing the game without them. On the other hand, Bruce is only a junior; he has another football season with Mr. King to consider. They also know that Bruce talks out his problems with his girlfriend, Peggy, and that Peggy is extremely honest and will urge Bruce not to get mixed up in anything illegal.

What will happen when the conspirators approach Bruce with their plans? What sort of arguments will they use?

* *p.* 11 *, the remainder of the class.* As mentioned in the Introduction, the class may do assigned reading while student actors are engaged in lengthy rehearsals. If the rehearsal time is too brief for reading, and if no discussion topic is suggested in the lessons, an analysis of the necessary actions in the scene being rehearsed may be a worthwhile activity. See Lesson 2, pp. 21-28 in the first volume of An Introduction to Theatre for a sample of such an analysis.

* *p.* 15 *, more is at stake now.* This is one of a large number of opportunities in the course of these lessons for additional work in improvisation or play writing. The character of the class, its success in the earlier lessons, and the available time will determine whether it would be worthwhile to work dramatically with the scene between Bruce and Peggy or with any of the other scenes which offer similar opportunities.

Brutus' Soliloquy

* *p.* 29 *, degrees by which he did ascend.* It might be interesting to point out that the same figure of speech was used recently in reference to ex-President Johnson, by a writer who thought it was unusual for a self-made man to have sympathy for poor people:

> Most "self-made" successes kick down the ladder by which they themselves have risen (David Riesman, "McCarthy and Kennedy," New Republic, April 13, 1968, p. 23).

* *p. 30 , misdeeds he has already committed.* By modern standards, and probably by Elizabethan ones, Caesar had done enough cruel and corrupt things that Shakespeare certainly could have enabled Brutus to make a good case that a man with such a record as Caesar's would probably abuse the king's power if he were given it. An extra credit assignment for an ambitious student might be an investigation of Caesar's use of his power in Italy and in Gaul. This might lead to a brief discussion of what dramatic reasons Shakespeare might have had for having his Brutus be unable to find anything in Caesar's record to criticize.

* *p. 32 , Brutus' character...revealed in the speech.* The following story--if you like to tell stories--is a good example of the sort of reasoning Brutus is engaging in.

> An older man is waiting at a bus stop. A young man who is also waiting asks him for the time. The older man refuses to say what time it is. Surprised, the young man asks, "Why on earth won't you tell me the time?"
>
> "Why won't I tell you the time?" the older man says, "I'll tell you why not. We're going to be waiting for this bus for a half-hour. I tell you the time and we'll get in a conversation. You're a pleasant young man and I am very hospitable. We talk and I'll invite you home for dinner. You would meet my daughter, who is just about your age. You would like her cooking and you would ask her for a date. She would like you. After a while you would come around and ask me if you could marry her.
>
> "And I don't want my daughter marrying a bum who's too poor to buy himself a watch!"

* *p. 33 , to join the conspiracy.* Some teachers who have used earlier versions of these lessons felt that they should have included more scenes to be acted out by the students. The meeting between Brutus and the conspirators in Act II, Scene i (ll. 86-228) is one such scene which if acted out might well enhance the impact of these lessons. However we decided not to include it for two reasons: 1) We felt it would add two to three class periods to a unit that is already fairly long. 2) The acting of this scene at this point would interrupt a carefully planned sequence of acting experiences beginning with the improvisation of Bruce's Dilemma and leading slowly to a confrontation with Shakespearean dialogue.

However, if you feel a particular class would profit by acting the scene, we suggest the following condensation. Include only:

lines 86- 97
112-117
154-191
221-228

Caesar's Assassination

* *p.* 38 *, enter the Senate chamber.* Consider how long it would take to act the first 13 or 14 lines of Act III, Scene i on a naturalistic set--a passage through the streets, steps to climb, doors to open, a spacious room to be traversed. This would be a good point to interject--if you wish--a discussion of the stage on which Julius Caesar was first performed.

> We should note the space-freedom Shakespeare assumes.... Nothing more complicated has occurred than Caesar and the Senators taking their places, while the crowd disperses and the conspirators regroup themselves, so that the "state" becomes the center of attention--and we are in the Senate House (Harley Granville-Barker, "Preface to Julius Caesar" in Prefaces to Shakespeare, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963, p. 214).

* *p.* 42 *, put on his plays.* This well may be a fact students do not know, and it is a relevant one which you may wish to discuss more fully. It accounts for the brevity of Shakespeare's stage directions and it reinforces a point these lessons have been stressing, namely that because Shakespeare wrote his plays for the theatre, not for the classroom or the library, the reader must try to imagine the actions that accompany the dialogue.

* *p.* 44 *, levelled their blows at the same person.* For comparison, and for some additional information, Plutarch's account of the assassination as it appears in his "Life of Brutus" is reproduced below.

> Now when the senate was gone in before to the chamber where they were to sit, the rest of the company placed themselves close about Caesar's chair, as if they had some suit to make to him, and Cassius, turning his face to Pompey's statue, is said to have invoked it, as if it had been sensible of his prayers. Trebonius, in the meanwhile, engaged Antony's attention at the door, and kept him in talk outside. When Caesar entered, the whole senate rose up to him. As soon as he was sat down, the men all crowded round about him, and set Tullius Cimber, one of their own number, to intercede in behalf of his brother that was banished; they all joined their prayers with his, and took Caesar by the hand, and kissed his head and his breast.
>
> But he putting aside at first their supplications, and afterwards, when he saw they would not desist, violently rising up, Tullius with both hands caught hold of his robe and pulled it off from his shoulders, and Casca, that stood behind him, drawing his

dagger, gave him the first, but a slight wound, about the shoulder. Caesar snatching hold of the handle of the dagger, and crying out aloud in Latin, "Villain Casca, what do you?" he, calling in Greek to his brother, bade him come and help. And by this time, finding himself struck by a great many hands, and looking around about him to see if he could force his way out, when he saw Brutus with his dagger drawn against him, he let go Casca's hand, that he had hold of, and covering his head with his robe, gave us his body to their blows. And they so eagerly pressed towards the body, and so many daggers were hacking together, that they cut one another; Brutus, particularly, received a wound in his hand, and all of them were besmeared with the blood.

Caesar being thus slain, Brutus, stepping forth into the midst, intended to have made a speech, and called back and encouraged the senators to stay; but they all affrighted ran away in great disorder, and there was a great confusion and press at the door, though none pursued or followed. For they had come to an express resolution to kill nobody beside Caesar, but to call and invite all the rest to liberty.

The Confrontation: 1

* *p.* 48 , *The prose paraphrase.* One teacher using an earlier draft of these lessons divided her honors class into several groups and had each spend 20 minutes writing its own prose paraphrase. Then the group whose paraphrase was judged most effective blocked, rehearsed, and presented it before the class. Afterwards several students said the paraphrasing was one of the most useful exercises in the unit. We believe that when done in groups and limited to 20 minutes such an activity may, indeed, be justified for a class of bright students. However, asking average students to paraphrase at this point in the lessons would probably be inadvisable, since it would produce the frustrations we are striving to avoid.

* *p.* 49 , *begin the scene again.* When the student actors begin to do a scene, instruct the other students to close their books or put away their scripts and to watch and listen.

Antony's Funeral Oration

* *p. 74, the italiced words.* Make sure no students think the italicization is Shakespeare's.

* *p. 90, done by professional actors.* So many recordings of Julius Caesar, or of excerpts from it, are available that we are simply assuming that one or more can be obtained on short notice. Since the quality of Shakespeare recordings varies so greatly, it really would be preferable here--and with the "Cry Havoc!" speech, earlier--to play for the students several versions of a scene.

* *p. 93, progress in learning to visualize.* As part of an informal experiment, the test at the end of this lesson was given to a ninth grade honors class (mean IQ around 135) in a suburban school and to an average ninth grade class (mean IQ around 95) in a "ghetto" school. The honors class had not had these lessons, while the ghetto students were studying them. Not one student in the honors class read the scene well enough to see the necessary action; instead they wrote little essays on mob psychology. Only five out of 35 of the ghetto students, after studying the lessons, did not see the action demanded by Shakespeare's words. This suggested to us that there is indeed a need for the type of instruction given in these lessons; and that it is not safe to assume that even the brightest students can read plays without special instruction. Another tryout of the test in an evening school class of teachers (including many English teachers) yielded no correct answers. But when the test has been taken at the proper point in this sequence of lessons, an overwhelming majority of students in all kinds of classes have read the passage well enough to correctly answer the question.

Brutus and Lucius

* *p. 107, Who is Lucius?* If the earlier scene between Brutus and Lucius (in II, i) has been read, the dialogue here must, of course, be suitably amended.

Conclusion

* *p. 132, suggestions for evaluating the tests...appendix.*

Notes on evaluating the short-answer examination.

Part I. Action.

A. The most obvious positioning of the characters would be this: Antony should be on a level with, or a bit downstage of Caesar; the attendants should not be blocking the audience's view of Caesar or Antony. Brutus and Cassius should be well toward the front of the stage (given Caesar's position on the diagram) and probably to one side of center. The arrows should indicate Caesar and Antony facing one another. The attendants should be watching Caesar. Brutus and Cassius may either be watching Caesar or ignoring him, probably the former.

However, if a student should come up with a quite different positioning of the characters that seems to work for the audience and makes sense of the dialogue, he should be given credit for it.

B. Cassius and Brutus probably are not supposed to overhear Caesar's remarks. If a student answers this question "yes," however, give him credit if his answer to the next question specifies that Cassius reacts to what he hears Caesar say about him.

C. Most simply, Cassius and Brutus stop talking and stand still while Caesar and Antony speak. They may watch Caesar, or ignore him, or one may watch him. Or they may react in one way or another--by facial expression or business such as whispering. Just so what they are described as doing (1) does not distract attention from Caesar and (2) has some relationship to the dramatic situation.

D. Caesar's position and his "tone of voice" should be appropriate to (or maybe should contrast with) the grand self-assurance of his references to himself.

Part II. Character.

Since the speech is revelatory primarily of Caesar's and Cassius' characters, student responses dealing with Antony and Brutus may--and should--be farfetched or strained.

A. Caesar. On the literal level, we learn Caesar is deaf in one ear. We also learn something about his taste in men, his sharpness as a judge of character, his utter faith in himself (his pompousness, even).

B. Cassius. We learn about Cassius what Caesar says about him, and we are probably meant to take Caesar's description as accurate.

C. Antony. We learn, from what Caesar says, in what ways Antony is the opposite of Cassius. We learn from what Antony says that he is unaware of what Cassius is up to.

D. Brutus. We learn about Brutus that he does not understand Cassius' motives or appreciate his dangerousness.

Part III.

There are no right answers to this question. It is a topic for discussion that may start students thinking about standards of aesthetic judgments. Any answer that shows an effort at thought should be credited.

ANSWER SHEET

JULIUS CAESAR: TEST

Part I

T 1.
F 2.
T 3.
T 4.
F 5.
T 6.
F 7.
F 8.
F 9.
T 10.
F 11.
F 12.
T 13.
T 14.
F 15.
T 16.
F 17.
F 18.
F 19.
T 20.

T 21.
T 22.
F 23.
T 24.
F 25.
T 26.
T 27.
F 28.
F 29.
T 30.
F 31.
F 32.
F 33.
T 34.
F 35.

Part II

Caesar 36.
Antony 37.
Caesar 38.
Caesar's ghost 39.
Soothsayer 40.
Brutus 41.
Cassius 42.
Casca 43.
Caesar 44.
Antony 45.